



THE LUDGATE ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE

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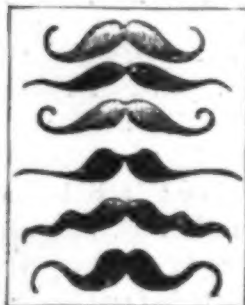
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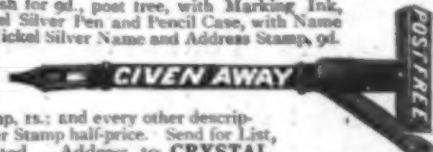
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A LESSON FROM THE BAGPIPES.

THE bagpiper—we have all seen him and heard his music. The point which we wish to consider, however, is the fact that the principal part of the bagpipe—the *bag* itself—is *the stomach of a pig*. Therefore when you next see a bagpiper playing "*Scots wha hae*" you may perceive just how big a pig's stomach is.

Meanwhile, how big is yours? You don't know? Probably not. Place the palm of your right hand on what is called the "pit" of the stomach, turning the ends of your fingers slightly to the left, towards the heart. Your hand will then cover about the space usually occupied by the stomach. But, bear in mind, there is no telling the exact size of this bag. In persons who have starved to death it is no bigger than your finger. In a man who died suffocated after a great dinner the stomach filled more than half his inside. Be good enough to read what these people have to say and then we will come to the pith of the matter.

"In August, 1892," says one, "I began to feel weak and low. I had no energy; everything was a trouble and a burden to me. I grew worse, and after a time I could neither eat nor drink the least morsel but I had great distress in the stomach. I was much troubled with wind, and got so nervous that I lost a deal of sleep. I have sat up in bed for hours and hours rubbing my chest.

"Finally I sank down so low as to be confined to my bed, and sent for my married daughter, from Downham, to help me. The doctor was able only to give me ease for the time. He considered my case so serious that he came to see me *twice a day*. Three months passed, when a lady told me of a medicine from which she herself had derived great benefit. I got it from Mr. Martin, grocer, and after using it a week I felt much better, and soon afterward was well as ever, (Signed) Mrs. E. Pilgrim, Wareham, Stoke Ferry, May 17th, 1893."

Again. "In October, 1889, I was taken with dreadful spasms and pain in the pit of my stomach. They were so bad I could hardly move; I thought I should suffocate. My appetite was poor, and after eating I had great pain in the chest and side. I was also much

troubled with wind and phlegm. On and off I suffered like this for two years. Nothing did me any good. Having heard of your remedy I got a bottle from Mr. J. C. Evans, chemist, High Street, Harborne, and began taking it. Presently I found relief, and the bad symptoms I have described gradually left me. Since then I have kept in good health. (Signed) Henry Winter, Metchley Lane, Harborne, Birmingham, January 11th, 1893."

We could fill a newspaper with such letters as these, but for the purpose of this article two will answer as well as fifty. This kingdom is full of people who undergo torments from what they call stomach complaints. It is "all along" of that contractible and expansible *bag* we have been talking about. That's the mill where your food is ground; the place where your blood is distilled; the cradle wherein you are constantly rocked, even as a little child. While it does its mystic duty perfectly, you sing, dance, work, play, eat, drink, and sleep. When it begins to fail, you suffer as Mrs. Pilgrim did; as Mr. Winter did; as nameless millions do. They try to tell us how they feel, but cannot. Dante and Swedenborg tried to describe hell; a waste of words, gentlemen, a waste of words.

In indigestion and dyspepsia all "stomach troubles," "stomach ailments," &c., are combined. Let us, for once, defy the grammar and say, "*They are that*;" no less, nothing else. It is the disease of diseases, death in life, the cloud that is black with maladies yet to come. Liver complaint with its ghastly tint of decay; rheumatism with its throbbing inflammations and joint-rending stabs of agony; kidney and bladder disorders; asthmatic struggles of the lungs for breath; these and other so-called maladies are merely signs and sequences of indigestion and dyspepsia—more or less advanced; of something gone wrong with that nervous, sensitive, *living* bag into which you so thoughtlessly toss your breakfasts, dinners, and teas.

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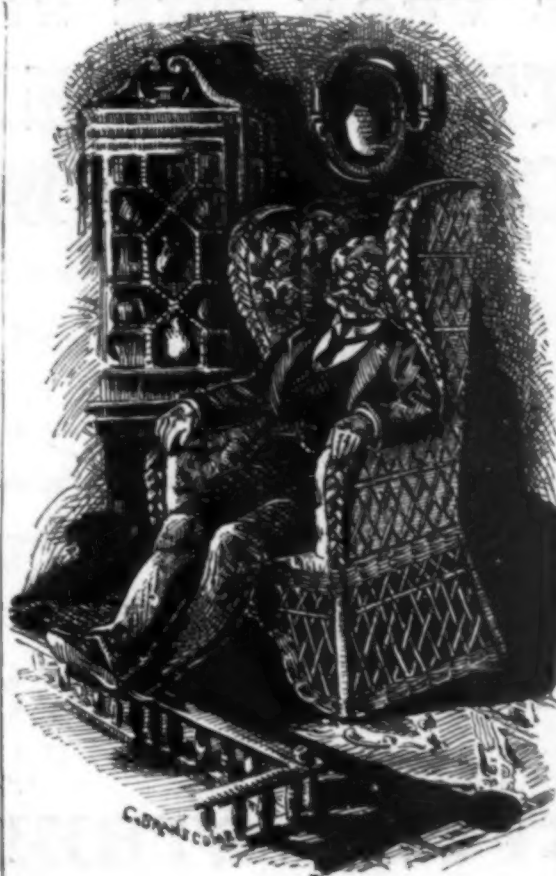
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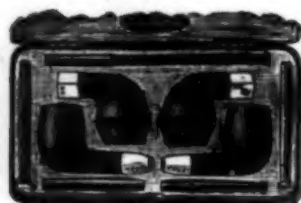
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The Ludgate Illustrated Magazine.

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COUPON FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION, APRIL 30th, 1895.

I submit the accompanying Photograph for Competition under the Rules, and declare that it was taken by myself.

Signed _____

For Particulars see Page 668.



For APRIL, 1895.
For Particulars see Page 641.



PEARS

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TO HER MAJESTY

The Queen.

Bald Heads.



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THE SPOT

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PRESENTED TO THE
ROYAL MASONIC INSTITUTION OF
BY
THOMAS NORMAN J. KOTHMAN
JUNE 20, 1883

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES, PAST GRAND MASTER

Young England at School.

*THE ROYAL MASONIC INSTITUTION FOR BOYS,
WOOD GREEN.*



IN placing before my readers one of the great charities connected with the Masonic body, it is far from my intention to enter into any details connected with the craft, beyond the liberality of those connected with the brotherhood. That this Institution claims a place in our series is beyond doubt, for not only do the boys obtain a thoroughly sound education, but the provision made for their comfort by the Governing Body, compares most favourably with some of the greatest of our public schools. Unfortunately for the Institution it cannot, however, be said that its situation is an advantageous one, but this is not the fault of anyone connected with the Charity, for Wood Green, although some little distance away from London, and at one time a favourite suburb of the great metropolis, and famous for that once fashionable resort, "Alexandra Palace," has greatly deteriorated, and around the school has grown up quite a little town of artisans dwellings. As far as location goes, I can only say that the Masonic Institution for Boys would be greatly benefited were it removed into the country, a fact I feel sure the Governing Board recognise, and will hasten to adopt as

soon as possible. The School itself, as will be seen from our illustrations, is an imposing pile standing in its own freehold grounds, with good space attached and close at hand for playing accommodation.

It appears, according to the records, that the Institution was founded as far back as 1798 by that section of the craft which at the time was designated as the Ancient or Atholl Masons, and further that the Lodge of United Mariners, ranking as No. 23 on the roll of the Ancient or Atholl Grand Lodge, played the leading part in establishing it. It is most clearly argued by Mr. J. Morrison McLeod, the Secretary to the Institution, in a paper on "The Work of the Institution and its Future," that to William Burwood, a licensed victualler in Wapping, belongs the honour of having founded the School, although credit appears to have been given to Francis Colombine Daniel, a medical practitioner in Wapping, who, later in life, received the honour of knighthood for his clever invention of life-saving apparatus. Mr. McLeod states that the idea was not entirely without foundation, for, as Mr. Daniel was also initiated into the United Mariners Lodge, he did, as the intimate personal friend of the founder, take an active part in instituting the Charity; but he gives explanatory reasons that prove convincingly that Wm. Burwood was the legitimate founder, which, of course, I cannot dispute or attempt to argue. There appears little that can be said of the early days of the Institution, beyond that Rule VII. of the regulations, published by T. Harper, jun., Crane Court, Fleet Street, in 1812, reads as follows:—"That, until a sufficient fund can be raised for building or purchasing a School House, the children be annually provided with decent and appropriate clothing and properly instructed in reading, writing and



GENERAL VIEW OF THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS

arithmetic at respectable schools adjacent to their parents' residence." It was, however, a long time before the "sufficient fund" turned up, for the "Ancient" brethren were, as a rule, not overburdened with means, and though their "Grand Lodge" rendered it material support, the efforts of the Governors were more inclined to extend the benefits of the Charity to as many children as possible in preference to providing for the accumulated fund to build the School House. Then came the time when "Ancient" and "Modern" Masons were united; but the funds were insufficient to commence building, and it was only after a lapse of sixty years that the Governors found themselves in a position to board, firstly a part and afterwards the whole of the boys on the establishment. Thus, during the "Ancient" *régime* and for many years subsequently, the Institution resembled more nearly the present Provincial Educational Associations than the School as it is now constituted.

In 1830 King William IV. consented to become Patron, and henceforth the institution became known as the "Royal Masonic Institution for Boys." Eight years later the Grand Lodge granted the annual payment of £150, a sum it still continues as a subscription.

In 1841 Mr. Moore took up the Treasurership, and under his careful guidance, notwithstanding a defaulting secretary, the number of children was raised to seventy and a capital of £10,000 was invested in Government Stock. It was not, however, until 1856 that the Governors were enabled to obtain a School House, but having obtained the approval of the Earl of Zetland, who was at that time Most Worshipful Grand Master, and President of the Charity, together with further

substantial donations from the Grand Lodge, a purchase was made of the mansion and grounds adjoining—about 10 acres—known as Lordship House, Lordship Lane, Tottenham. The alterations were soon made and the first batch of 25 boys was admitted in the spring of 1857, and so successful was the experiment that at the end of the first year it was resolved to admit the whole of the children.

In 1861 A. U. Thiselton, who had faithfully fulfilled the duties of secretary for 35 years, retired upon a pension, and his post was filled by Mr. Frederick Binckes, the late secretary. Mr. Binckes plays an important part in the history of the Institution, and such was the zeal and energy with which he discharged his duties that at the first Festival—that of 1862—with which he was associated the receipts reached £3,682, or twice the amount that had ever previously been obtained.

This success was followed in 1863 by another even greater, for the Festival that year yielded no less a sum than £4,500, which induced the Governors to build a new School, sufficiently large to accommodate 100 boys, on the site of the old one, which was soon carried into effect, for the first stone was laid, August 8th, by Mr. Algernon Perkins, Past Grand Warden, and two years later the new premises were formally dedicated by Earl de Grey



MR. J. M. MCLEOD (SECRETARY TO THE INSTITUTION)

and Ripon, Deputy Grand Master.

In 1866 the building was completed and the full rôle of 100 boys placed upon the Charity, but to do this the whole of the invested funds had gone and a mortgage of £10,000 on the premises was necessary. Strenuous efforts were made in 1869 to rid the



VIEW OF MAIN BUILDING FROM THE GROUNDS

Charity of this encumbrance, and at the Festival held that year, under the presidency of the Deputy Grand Master, the enormous sum of £12,000 was raised, and at the following Festival, in 1870, when H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, Past Grand Master, presided, there was close upon £10,000 placed to the credit of the Charity, which was again free from debt. Year by year the school received cordial support which enabled the Governors to build additional premises and provide for 200 boys and to replace the capital that had been used for building purposes. With the Charity increasing it was found that further funds were still wanted, and Mr. Binckes and the Governors made another strong appeal, in 1883, at the festival over which Lord Holmesdale (now Earl Amherst), Provincial Grand Master of Kent presided, with the result that the unprecedented amount of £23,000 was given to the Institution. A new Hall and a Preparatory School was erected and the number of boys increased to upwards of 260. After twenty-eight years of marvellous ability and exceptional results, Mr. Binckes resigned and so closed an important page in the history of the Institution.

In 1890 he was succeeded by Mr. McLeod, who I have already mentioned and to whom I am indebted for his assistance freely given in connection with this article. It is a known fact that the basis of Masonry is founded upon Religion and Charity, and the latter a member of the Craft never evades, when appeals are made from the representatives of the various benevolent institutions. Mr. J. Morrison McLeod was elected to the secretaryship in 1890, at a time when the management of the Institution was completely revised, a new Head-master also being elected and a provisional committee of thirty brethren, representing the



THE REV. HARRY HEBB, HEAD-MASTER

different parts of the country, were entrusted with the management. That Mr. McLeod has more than justified his election, is proved by the fact that during the four years, ending December, 1894, the invested capital of the Institution had risen from £17,500 to £51,650, which is chiefly due to his untiring energy in the interest of the Charity. The number of boys now on the books has reached the highest point—viz., 277.

The new master, elected at the same time as Mr. McLeod, was the Rev. Harry Hebb, who has not only carried the standard of efficiency so high as to give satisfaction to the Government Board for his work, but his method of management is such, that his assistants work for him and with him with a good will, while the boys under his care appreciate the kindness shown them.

The income of the institution is mainly derived from voluntary contributions, which in great part are brought in by stewards representing Lodges of Freemasons, who hand in lists at the Annual Festival. The next Festival is to be presided over by Lord Egerton, of Tatton, who is the Provincial Grand Master of Cheshire, and it will be held early in July. The Annual Prize Distribution will take place the

day previous to the Festival, when Her Grace the Duchess of Buckingham and Chandos will preside.

It happened upon the first of our visits to the School that the "Board of Management" had a meeting on that day, and our artist succeeded in obtaining a good group of the members in attendance, which is reproduced here. The liberality, self-denial, and zeal displayed by this Board is most marked, and the members bring to bear a very broad-minded view in their government, and have well-earned the confidence of the subscribers.

Among the numerous subjects taught at the Institution is printing, and there is a unique little printing room with press and a good quantity of type. It is here, however, where the School magazine is printed—*The Masonian*—a bright little magazine recording the events of the term and edited by Mr. H. V. Crane, the second master, who has given me valuable assistance in ascertaining the life and spirit of the place. Our illustrations will serve to describe the buildings, therefore few remarks are necessary from me, beyond that the main building serves as Upper School, the ground floor providing numerous rooms leading out of a long corridor running the whole length of the building. The building attached to this main block once served as the Chapel, but this has now been made a Dining Hall, where the whole school meets to an excellently-spread board, for there is no stint in either food or quality at the Freemasons' School. A new Chapel was erected detached from the School, which, not being consecrated, serves also as "Big School" and a venue for all the festivities from time to time. Beyond the Chapel, or Big School, is the Preparatory School, where the new boys receive the groundwork of a good education. The upper story of the buildings is almost wholly devoted to light and airy dormitories, and, although apparently plain, everything conducive to the boys' comfort, health, safety and cleanliness is to be found there.

Now we will consider the life of a boy at this Institution. When first he arrives he goes at once to the Preparatory School, where formerly he would have been under the tutelage of three governesses, and would have worked, fed and slept in a building quite separate from the rest of the School buildings. Two



LIBRARY

masters have for several years now taken the place of the governesses, and the little boys take their meals with their older school-mates in the large dining hall. The rooms no longer required, therefore, for domestic



CARPENTERS SHOP

purposes have been converted into a set of very spacious and convenient class-rooms, whilst on the Preparatory side the boy makes sure of a good foundation for his higher work later on, and has, besides, plenty of time and opportunity for developing his athletic instincts in the direction of cricket, football, and last, but not least, swimming. However, it is not till a boy is promoted to the Upper School, that he can really be said to have begun his school career. Let us see how an average boy will spend his time then.

At 6.30 in the summer he is awakened by the bell, and before his breakfast, at 8 o'clock, he will do an hour's work in the class-room. In winter, however, the bell rings at half-past seven, and the hour's work is done in the afternoon instead. From 9 till 12.30 he will be hard at work, with 10 minutes break at 11. Dinner at 1.15, after which the boys in the senior forms, and certain of the others in rotation, are

free to go into the town to buy "tuck," there being no "tuck" shops on the premises, and otherwise amuse themselves. In the winter, football (Association rules) ranks highest in favour, but hockey and fives are formidable rivals, and follow it very closely, and matches and tournaments are frequently taking place in all three games. In



THE READING-ROOM

summer, school is from 2.30 till 3.30, and after that cricket is the order of the day. At cricket and football the boys more than hold their own with the neighbouring Schools, which may be considered remarkable from the youthfulness of the elevens. The Grocers Company's School, at Hackney Downs, are considered the most formidable amongst the Institution's numerous rivals, and the annual fixtures with them are always the occasion of immense excitement and enthusiasm. The masters take a leading part in all the outdoor occupations, which naturally contributes to the successes attained in the various branches. Games are not compulsory, yet every one takes part in them, and the whole is under the careful guidance of Mr. Roberts. Tea is at 6.15, and after that comes Preparation in the big Hall from 7 till 8.30, when the smaller boys go to bed, the senior boys being allowed an extra half-hour in the Reading-room.

The Reading-room and Library are probably the foremost amongst the most interesting departments of the School, and are certainly unique as regards appearance and management. The impetus and counsel are Mr. Lewis's, to whom the credit of the result is due, which is the establishment and furnishing in a really beautiful way of two charming rooms. The Reading-room is an exceptionally fine room, and prior to the building of the big Hall, it served for the purposes of "Big School." This Home and Sanctuary, as it may well be termed, is used by 100 boys, consisting of the two senior forms, and the remainder are boys selected on result of work. There are some 1,500 volumes in the room, chiefly works of biography, fiction, poetry and travel. The supply of books comes partly from presents and partly from a monthly subscription from the Governing Body for both rooms. On the Reading-room tables and shelves may be found most of the periodicals and magazines that a boy can take pleasure and profit from. All the shelves are open to any boy, and so much is the privilege of the unrestrained and immediate access valued, that all the books are returned to their proper places every evening, and it is the rarest thing, in consequence, to find a misplaced book, and such cases as accidental or wilful damage, or loss, is unknown. The whole order and management and responsibility rests with the boys, who act as librarians, and six boys, each working one division, take upon themselves this task to maintain the discipline



GROUP OF MASTERS



A GROUP OF GOVERNING COMMITTEE

and preservation of the books. The boys are absolutely free from magisterial control in these rooms, which is appreciated to such a degree that the silence is as unbroken as in a club reading-room.

The sixty junior boys have a separate Library in their own department where they have the opportunity of reading, under supervision, specially selected children's books.

Chess and draughts are the most popular indoor games and a chess column is a regular feature of the *Masonian*, the bright little school magazine which I have previously mentioned as under the editorship of Mr. H. V. Crane, who is also a chess enthusiast and a member of the North London and Manchester Chess Clubs. In a recent number the *pièce de résistance* was a problem, in three moves, composed by one of the boys, a neat problem and difficult enough to give the editor some trouble in solving. Mr. C. E. Biaggini on one occasion played thirteen of the boys simultaneously, winning ten, drawing two, and losing one, and was pleasantly surprised at the gallant resistance the boys made to his skilful onslaught.

The monotony of the evening is sometimes broken by a lecture on some popular subject, given either by one of the masters or by some Masonic friend. Concerts also by boys and masters, or by outside friends, keep up the boys' taste for music, which is largely catered for by the Head-master and his excellent staff. Music forms a part of the instruction of every boy, and it is marvellous what a tone its influences give to the "life" of the school. The boy never allows his games to interfere with his musical studies, nor does he appear to neglect his outdoor exercise, for at almost every spare moment, too short to go into the playing-grounds, he is magnetically drawn to one of the several little apartments, each containing a piano, where he is allowed to strum away, in solitude, to his heart's content.

Some of the boys in their spare time amuse themselves by carpentering

(taught by a resident carpenter, Mr. Bunce), gardening, painting, book-binding, for every boy must have occupation over and above his school work. Hobbies of all sorts are naturally to be found fostered by various boys, such as stamp-collecting, pet-keeping, &c., &c.

Sunday is a quiet day, with plenty of leisure for reading or strolling in the grounds. In the afternoon a walk to some fixed spot about four miles out, with a roll call to ensure attendance of every boy, is always in the programme, exception only being taken in inclement weather.

The whole school is examined yearly by the Cambridge University Examining Board, and the report last year was very flattering. In past years the School was only able to shine in the examination for juniors, for owing to the early age at which the boys leave, not many candidates are sent in for the senior examinations. Thanks, however, to the valuable work and interest of the Board of Management, and the continual energy and ambition of the Head-master, Mr. Hebb, to place his school in the higher ranks of the educational world, some boys are now permitted to remain at the School for a longer period should they prove to the Head-master special aptitude for learning. It is, therefore, hoped that before long the boys of the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys will distinguish themselves in the examinations of higher character. The course is being extended every term, and boys are sent in for various public examinations besides the Cambridge Local, Senior and Junior, *i.e.*, London University, South Kensington in Natural Science and Art, Trinity College London in Theory of Music, and Pitman Society in Shorthand.

There is a small infirmary within the grounds of the Institution—a separate house which at one time served as the residence of the Head-master. There are six beds and day ward, &c., in charge of the medical officer, Dr. W. E. Porter, M.D., D.P.H. Camb., and a trained nurse. This has proved quite large enough for the demand upon it, contrary to the dictum of the Association of Medical Officers of Schools. The explanation of this lies in the fact that the work, play, food, hot baths, and all the other details of life are arranged primarily with a view to health. There is no coddling, but many little details so often neglected at schools and even at home are minutely considered and insisted upon. There is also a Sanatorium about a quarter of a mile away, where a staff is kept, under a trained nurse, and the arrangements are such as to provide a bed for every ten boys in the School. No expense is spared in this immediate isolation for doubtful cases, and for many years the School has been spared an epidemic of any kind.

Reviewing the whole, one cannot but remark that the Masonic body are supporting a most deserving and excellent institution, and although I have, perhaps, picked out most of its good points, there are a few that stand in great need of renovation. The swimming bath, although it has done excellent service is quite inadequate for so important a School. A really good gymnasium and more playing-fields would be acquisitions, whilst the quality of those existing could certainly be improved.

I am not attempting to throw out hints to those who are so thoroughly guiding a grand charity, for the fact is well known to the Board of Management that the development of the School during the past five years has been so rapid, owing to their enlightened and generous policy, that the present buildings and grounds are growing quite inadequate.

Moreover, they acknowledge that they are face to face with a big question, which means removal of the Institution into the country, for the neighbourhood has so degenerated that the surroundings are not now such as befit a great school.

With this problem to solve, there is no likelihood of any further expensive alterations at Wood Green, but there is, no doubt, when taking into consideration the increasing funds, and the value of the present site, the removal will take place

very speedily, when I do not hesitate in saying that the illustrations accompanying these remarks will probably be more valuable than they are to-day.

I may add there is a capital "Old Masonians" Association, with some 150 members, doing a quiet but gradually

increasing good work in keeping "old boys" in touch with each other.

In concluding this brief sketch on the Royal Masonic Institution for Boys, I would predict that a prominent future lies before the School, and ere long we shall be finding it taking a high position amongst our public schools. Not being on the "Square," I feared trouble prior to diving into this task, but it would be ungrateful of me to lay down my pen, without according Mr. McLeod, the Secretary, the Rev. H. Hebb, the Head-master, Mr. H. V. Crane, the second master, and to several members of the Board, and masters, my sincere thanks for their freely extended hand of friendship and assistance, which was to me convincing proof of the good objects and good fellowship that exist in this noble Craft, whereby my visit to Wood Green will long be counted as one of the most enjoyable and interesting missions in connection with our series—Young England at School.

W. CHAS. SARGENT.



A SICK ROOM—THE DOCTOR'S VISIT

Our Illustrations are from a splendid set of Photographs specially taken for the LUDGATE ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE by Mr. R. W. Thomas, 41, Cheapside, E.C., from whom Prints from the original negatives can be obtained.

The following Schools have already appeared in THE LUDGATE ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE:—Eton, Harrow, Rugby, Winchester, Westminster, Christ's Hospital, Dulwich, St. Paul's, Charterhouse, Wellington, Merchant Taylors', Marlborough, Clifton, Cheltenham, Leys College, Bedford Grammar, Haileybury College, Uppingham, Cranleigh, Highgate, Brighton College, Shrewsbury, Radley, Malvern College, Girton, Liverpool Blue-Coat School and Newnham (Harrow, Rugby and Clifton are out of print, but back numbers of the others can be obtained through all Booksellers, or direct from the Office, Temple House, Temple Avenue, London, E.C. Post-free, 8½d. each copy.)

HOW THE BULLION WAS BURIED



LEAVES FROM THE BUSH.

By EDWIN HUGHES, B.A.

Author of "An Apostle of Freedom," &c.

IN no other country in the world does autumn come in more gloriously than it does in Tasmania, when the fierce heat of summer tones down and leaves the day one long burst of mellow sunlight; when the soft winds sweep over the grain-laden plains; and when the fruits of the earth are coming to maturity in due season.

Never shall I forget the expedition that my host Beresford and myself took during that lovely "Indian summer," when we pushed on past the Great Lake to the Cradle Mountain, not very far from the upper waters of the River Pieman. And yet it was pleasant enough to get back to Beresford's cosy home in Bothwell, for the nights were beginning to grow cold, and the travelling was very rough, and I was glad to exchange the 'possum rug and the bivouac fire for the comfortable four-poster and the cheery hearth-side. There were many curios scattered about the house, and one in particular had often attracted my attention, and that was an old square-shaped casket that stood on a corner of the mantel-piece in the room where, when sport was over for the day, we usually discussed the creature comforts of grog and tobacco.

"I see you're staring at that box," said Beresford to me one evening.

"Yes," I said. "Looks as if it came out of the Ark."

"Well, it's hardly as ancient as that; but it's been a rare puzzle to me. When your old client Tredgett, who gave you your letter of introduction to me, found that treasure I was telling you about, at the mouth of the Pieman River, I came across this box amongst the bullion; and noticing that I took a fancy to it, Joe gave it to me. You remember the man that we called 'The Duke?'"

"Perfectly," I said. "You mean the fellow who came down from Sydney to 'put you away,' and who died from the wound you accidentally gave him."

"Yes, that's the man!"

"And," I went on, "who left Tredgett the clue where to find the gold."

"Yes," said Beresford. "Well, I expect he's the only person who could tell how the treasure came to be buried; and I've often wondered how so much gold

found its way to that lonely spot, though, as Joe says, 'it doesn't much matter where it come from seeing as we've got it, and as how it was left to me.'

By this time I had the box in my hand. There was no lock to be seen, nor did the most minute examination disclose any crack that might mark the line of the lid. That it was hollow and almost empty was apparent from its weight, but when I held it close to my ear and shook it, I could detect a noise, as of some slight object striking the sides.

"There's something inside it," I said. "Have you ever tried to open it?"

"Yes," said Beresford. "I've tried every way but smashing it. Somehow I don't like cutting a Gordian knot; I like to undo it. Do you have a try!"

My efforts to open the box were as unsuccessful as his had been, and presently I pushed it from me petulantly, and tried to make Beresford talk; but before many minutes had passed, I was at the box again, and the very difficulty of the puzzle made me all the more determined to solve it. And yet the matter was simple enough when at last I accidentally discovered it. The box rested on four short supports, and I had turned it over and was aimlessly playing with one of these, when it twisted in my fingers. I went on and unscrewed it, and doing the like by the other three the bottom of the box came off, and I drew a paper from the inside. There can be no doubt that the paper was written by the man of whom I had heard so much under the name of "The Duke," and he tells his own tale so plainly that nothing by way of explanation is necessary at my hands. I have, therefore, reproduced it *ipsissimis verbis*.

"I, known as John West, of no particular abode, but at present in

the city of Melbourne, am writing this statement, partly to satisfy the longings of a lonely man, and partly in case any person may happen upon a quantity of gold that I have concealed at the mouth of the River Pieman, in the Island of Van Diemen's Land. In all probability no hand but mine will ever unearth the bullion, but should it happen otherwise, whoever finds it is welcome to it, provided only that he shall see that the children hereinafter described, are well and tenderly brought up, and that he makes them his heirs. Failing these conditions may God wither the hand that touches the gold! My real name and up-bringing are matters of no moment now, but to make clear what happened, and to show how I became possessed of my wealth, I must begin with my life at the age of twenty-four. Harry Somers, Richard Sheldon, and myself—these are not real names, but as names are necessary I have made use of them—were fellow clerks in a banking house in London, and we were all guilty of the same indiscretion—we fell in love with the daughter of the head of the firm. I was the first to put my fortune to the touch, and I was refused, but in such a way that the refusal made my love for Elsie all the deeper. Harry Somers



"THERE WAS NO LOCK"

was the favoured one, and well knowing that it was next to impossible to gain the father's consent, they were married secretly, and that marriage was ferreted out, and duly reported by Sheldon, with the result that the husband was dismissed from the bank, and the wife turned out of her father's house, and for two years I could find no trace of my old friend. He went from bad



"LAID THE SCHEME BEFORE HIS WIFE"

to worse, always hunted by the demon of ill luck, and when at last I did come upon him, he was in low water indeed, and his wife and child nearly starving. They were proud, but I beat down their pride and helped them. All this time Sheldon's hatred of Harry must have gone on growing more intense, even though he had married the banker's second daughter, and had been pushed on until he was a man of great consequence in the firm, and likely some day to be a partner. One day, to my surprise, Harry walked into the bank, his face aglow with excitement, and presented a cheque signed by his uncle. Now this uncle had as effectually discarded him, as our Head had his daughter, but I knew that for his wife's sake Harry had asked for help, and I thought that at last the uncle had relented. Sheldon himself took the cheque, and carelessly asked how the presenter would have it. Bidding Harry wait a moment, Sheldon walked into an inner room. A few minutes went by, and then two policemen entered. The cheque was forged, and two months afterwards my friend was drafted on board a convict ship bound for Van Diemen's Land, a prisoner for fourteen years. I saw him before he sailed, and I knew that I had bidden good-bye to an innocent man, and it was not hard to guess the mind that had planned his ruin and the hand that had carried it out. It fell to my lot to comfort the sorrowing woman left behind, and the sight of her sufferings worked upon me to such an extent that I conceived a plan that gradually became so fixed an idea with me that I, at last, started to put it into execution. My purpose was nothing more nor less than to release my friend from the prison that I knew ought never to have received him. I laid the scheme before his wife, and she fell in with it at once. I realised such property as I had, and, with my savings, I was the possessor of some few thousands. I had neither kith nor kin to stay me, and so, after a long and tedious passage, we found ourselves in Sydney, and from there went down to Melbourne. The way that Elsie confided in me touched every chord of good in my nature; and when I used to go to my berth at night, with her child's kiss—aye, and her's, too—warm on my cheek, I knew that in spirit I was as much the uncle of the one and the brother of the other as though I were their relation by blood. I left them in Melbourne, but before I started for the island I made the acquaintance of a Roman Catholic priest, a warm-hearted, noble Irishman—a man upon whom, with the touch of the hand that consecrated him to his holy work, had descended most surely the gift of

carrying comfort to his fellow men. I told him our story, and his heart went out to us. He gave me letters to an official in Hobart Town, who, without, of course, having the slightest suspicion of my object, would help me to attain it.

"I found that Harry was at the Port Arthur Convict Station. I need not set out in full the various schemes to which I had recourse to procure admission to this establishment; suffice it to say that at last I found myself a passenger on board the Government schooner that made periodical trips from Hobart Town. I had letters of introduction to the commandant, a man who prided himself on what he called his system of discipline, but which in reality was a plan of torture so ingeniously contrived, and so faithfully carried out, that if ever Satan needed a right-hand man, the claims of the inventor and administrator of this system to occupy such a post could not lightly be passed over.

"When I presented my credentials to Major N——, I met with a great surprise and the first check in my undertaking; for sitting at the very table to which I had been invited was Dick Sheldon, with a smile on his evil face and not the slightest sign of embarrassment in his manner, for he had seen and recognised me as I came up from the boat.

"'So you're out here already!' was his greeting as I took his hand, for I knew that to make an enemy of him would be to ruin my plans, and to succeed I felt that I must fight him with his own weapons, and before the sun set I had convinced him that Harry Somers was the only obstacle in my path to happiness, and that my one end and aim was to get rid of him.

"'The obstacle needn't exist long,' was Sheldon's remark, 'and I can show you how to get rid of him. I came out to the colonies to establish a branch of our bank in Melbourne, and to manage the concern for a few years, and since we've opened out to each other I don't mind telling you that I jumped at the chance of making this a very hell upon earth for Somers,' and then he went on and told me his plans.

"Every particle of strength that God had given me rose up in rebellion against this fiend, and it was only by the utmost effort of self-control that I let him leave the place alive.

"It was the old story of bribing the warder, of brutal punishments inflicted for the most trivial offences, of the slow wearing out of all that was manly in the poor fellow's heart, until in utter despair he should either kill himself or get away into the Bush to end his days by rope or bullet.

"By Sheldon's contrivance I had an interview with the warder, and in less than five minutes I had put my finger on his weak spot, for the fellow had the most itching palm that gold ever soothed. The bribe I offered him made him shiver, though I never saw a man so utterly taken aback as he was when I told him what I wanted him to do, and when he saw that he could draw Sheldon's money and mine as well, he agreed to run the risk and help me, and in a subsequent interview he told me how I might carry out my design. He showed me that my only means of getting Harry away would be by boat. Such a dreary waste was it that lay inland, that most of the men who had escaped, and had not been captured, had left their bones to bleach in the wilderness. He told me where I could get a whaleboat that would stand almost any weather, and if I chose the right time of year—say January—would carry us easily to the mainland. It was then October. Sheldon and I went back in the schooner. I had purposely avoided Harry, but I had a line from him through the warder, and I went away happy in the thought that at least his lot would now be less hard to bear, and that if Heaven so willed it he would soon be free.

"Sheldon left for Melbourne shortly after we reached town, and then I bought my boat, and there in the grand harbour, and in the full swing of the steady sea-breeze, I learned to handle my craft as easily as though she had been a dingey. I had her painted a dull grey, and I even gave the sails a coating of the same colour,

and one day, early in January, I slipped off on my lonely voyage, with plenty of provisions stowed away forward, under the half-deck. I had had two or three communications from the warder as to the payment of the bribe agreed upon, and other matters, and by his instructions I observed the greatest caution in approaching Port Arthur, running in at night to the little cove where the *Seagull* could lie close under the shore. I was to make this spot, carefully marked out on a chart, on the night of the 15th, and if nothing happened by three o'clock, I was to slip away again into the offing and lie there out of sight until the next night. It was twelve o'clock when I made the land, and I had barely touched it, when there arose the baying of dogs, followed by the sharp crack of a rifle, and I knew that the prisoner's escape had been detected. I had drawn the boat close under the shore; everything lay ready to hand for running up the sail, the night was pitch dark, and the breeze a fresh one, and if only I could get Harry aboard, I felt that we had every chance in our favour. While I waited with straining ears, there came to me from a spot



"THREE MILES TO WINDWARD LAY A SCHOONER"

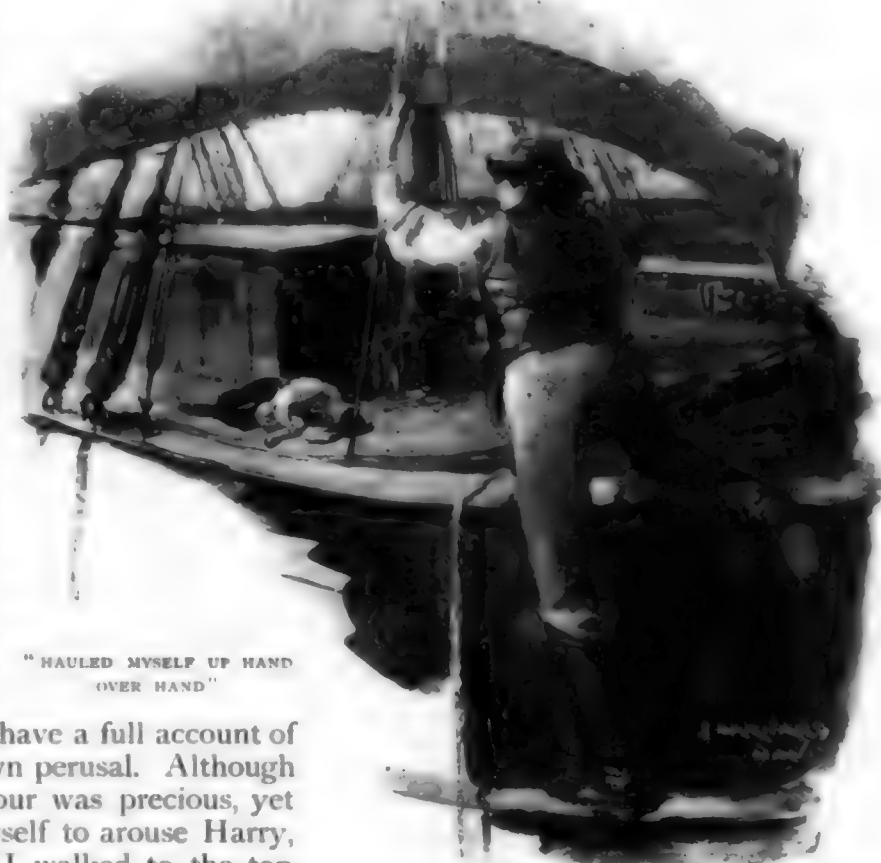
close at hand the note of the mope-hawk, and someone parted the bushes. 'Harry,' I whispered, and the next moment I had reached him my hand and pulled him aboard, and pushing off the *Seagull's* head, and running up the sail, I soon knew by the ripple at her forefoot that we were slipping away from the land. I had made certain of how I was to steer, but we said nothing to each other until we had gone so far that the noise and hubbub on the shore no longer reached us, though we could see the lights flashing. Then I found that

Harry had been hit, and badly, in the left arm, and I made shift as well as I could in the dark to put him straight, and when I had done so I crowded on all sail, and we were well away when the morning broke. But with the rising of the sun there came to us a sight that terrified us, for about three miles to windward of us lay a schooner, that when we first set eyes on her, looked exactly like the Government boat. Had I known who was on board, I should have given her a wider berth even than the police craft, for I learned afterwards that she was a vessel that Sheldon had bought, and at that very time he was on his way from Melbourne to gloat once more on Harry's sufferings. I don't know whether they saw us; at any rate they never interfered with us, and we carried on in the fresh breeze with all the canvas I could set, and rounding the southern point of the island, we ran up the west coast. Every hour Harry's wound grew more and more painful, and prop him up as I would, the pitching of our little craft in the, for her, heavy seas, shook him fearfully, until at last I was forced to put in, and we ran ashore at the mouth of the Pieman River, so that he might have some rest. I laid the boat up in a little inlet, and so well did her colour harmonise with her surroundings, that you had to be almost alongside her before

you discovered her. Choosing a spot near the foot of a big tree, I pitched our camp; and when I had made a bark sling for the wounded arm, and brewed some tea, I was pleased to see Harry sink into a quiet slumber. We had come ashore in the early morning, and it was on the afternoon of that January day that there happened to us the first of the series of events that I especially wish to put upon record, for although I may never be in the position to have a 'you dear

reader,' yet I want to have a full account of those events for my own perusal. Although I knew that every hour was precious, yet I could not bring myself to arouse Harry, and in the afternoon I walked to the top of a hill and looked out seaward, and there, about three or four miles away, and

standing inshore, was a large vessel, that I presently made out to be a brig under considerable canvas. I was terribly alarmed, but I saw at once that our best plan was to stay where we were—at all events, until dark. As I gazed, almost as one fascinated, on the approaching ship, I saw that something was wrong aboard her, for, instead of coming straight on, she yawed now to starboard, and now to port, in a way that showed me that no hand was guiding her. On she came, however, in her zigzag course, until at last I could see her deck, with its two houses, one abaft each mast, and lying near the forward house was the figure of a man, with something white beside him. Then, all of a sudden, and just when she looked to be driving straight for the little cove where our boat lay, she brought up against a bar that ran some way out in the river, and I thought her masts would have gone by the board, so suddenly did she ground; but they stood firm, and there, with never a sign of life about her, she lay jammed tight, and like to be high and dry at the very lowest water. I ran down to where I had left Harry, but he was resting so calmly that I let him sleep on; and as there was always plenty of water on the bar for the *Seagull*, I loosed her from her moorings and ran down under easy sail to the brig, and finding a rope hanging over her bows, I pulled on it till it came taut, and fastening the boat, hauled myself up hand over hand. There were two deck-houses, as I have said, and close to the one that had served as a fo'ksel lay the man I had seen, and beside him was a boy, some three or four years old, his head nestling on the man's bosom, and the wind lifting his golden curls with its every puff. I thought at first that they were both dead, but the steady rise and fall of the child's chest showed me that he was fast asleep, and the red streak that tracked away to the scuppers from the man's side told



"HAULED MYSELF UP HAND
OVER HAND"

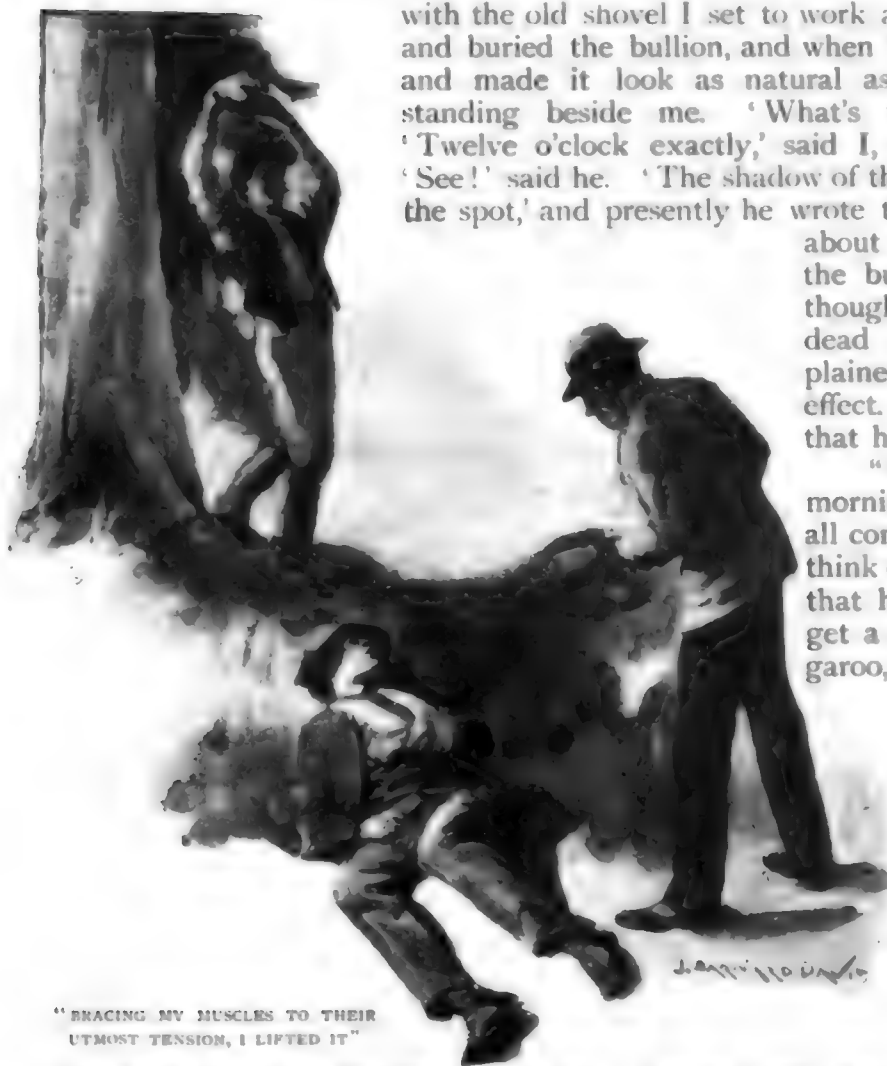
me what sort of rest he was taking. I was stooping over them when from the other deck-house came the plaintive cry of a little child. I went aft and pushing the door open looked into what had evidently been the state-room of the vessel. Close to where I stood were the dead bodies of three men heaped together; a little further on, the figure of a woman lay stretched across the table that ran athwart the room, and at the door of one of the berths was the form of a man in a half-sitting, half-lying posture. Whilst I gazed at the scene, horror stricken, there came to me again the child's wail 'Mamma! Mamma!' Though the bright sunbeams were playing through the windows and the fresh breeze blowing through the door, there was something in the awful silence of the figures, and in the many evidences of the deadly struggle that had gone on, that I could scarce stand, and it was only when the pleading cry came again to break the stillness that I mastered my terror and found courage to pass the dead bodies, and push back the door at the end. In the berth lay a little child, and the moment I entered she stretched out her arms. 'Mamma! Mamma!' was all that she could say, and the touch of the little mite as I held her to my breast, brought back a fuller beat to my heart and stayed the trembling of my limbs. I hurried out of the deck-house and awakened the boy. He looked up at me with his big blue eyes. 'Tom's asleep,' he said, 'I can't wake him.' 'Come along with me,' I said, and so, somehow or other, I got them into the boat, and letting her run under the stern, I read the ship's name, '*The Prairie Flower*, Baltimore.' Drifting astern at the end of a rope was one of her boats, and when I looked into it I saw that it contained mast and sail and a water keg, as though someone had intended leaving the ship in it. It was strange how the children seemed to confide in me, though I could not help wondering what I was going to do now, with a wounded man and two children on my hands, and when I woke Harry up, he couldn't help me much, though, to be sure, the two little dears sat down beside him with never a whimper. I told him all about the stranded vessel, and he wanted to get up, and go aboard with me, but when I had had time to recover my nerve, I made up my mind to thoroughly overhaul the brig by myself, while the sunlight was strong, and so I slipped down to her again, and boarded her as before.

"I went to the woman first. She was shot through the heart, and I could see that the wound that had killed her had been but recently inflicted. In the hand of the man who was lying at the end of the cabin was a key, and taking it from his unresisting



"THERE FLASHED UP SUCH A GLOW AND GLITTER"

fingers, I found that it fitted the lock of the state-room door, near which he lay. Opening the door, I looked in. The room was bare of furniture, but on the floor were several old tea-chests, covered with the cabalistic Chinese characters. With no very definite object I caught hold of one of these, and tried to move it. I had to put forth my utmost effort. The tops of the cases were nailed on, and taking out my big knife I prised them open. The bars of metal inside the boxes were gold, the gold that you who are reading this, will most probably have handled, the gold that, unless you do with it as I ask you, will as surely be a curse to you as it was to those on board the ill-fated ship. I thought nothing of curses then, nor of ill-luck. I determined to secure the bullion without delay, and piece by piece I loaded my boat, and got it away in twice, and it was strange that in the new excitement that had come to me, I could pass, aye, and even touch the dead men with never a shiver. A third visit I paid, and then I overhauled the body of the man who had held the key of the strong-room. In the breast-pocket of his coat I found a flat tin box, and I laid it down on the table where the sunlight shone aslant, and opened it with one of the keys from the bunch that I found in another of the man's pockets. When the lid fell back there flashed up at me such a glow and glitter, that made me reel back against the side of the cabin, and stare at the sparkling jewels with eyes distended and mouth agape. I waited for no further discoveries, but slipped into the boat and ashore as fast as possible. The bullion I left on the end of a narrow slip of land, the jewels I carried to Harry, and the sight of them did more to abate the fever of his wound, by the fever of wealth it engendered, than all the remedies I had tried. I fed the children, and made them comfortable with the rugs I had brought from the ship, and when I had persuaded Harry to lie down again, I set myself to think of some plan, by which we might bring off our wealth, and I could think of none better than to bury the bullion, and carry the jewels away with us. I had fallen into a light slumber, when I was awakened by the noise of flapping canvas. It had been low water when the brig grounded. Now the tide was nearly full, and in the light of the stars I could see her slipping slowly down the river, like some phantom ship with her ghostly burden. Whether I had dreamt it, or whether it came to me at the moment of waking, I know not, but there flashed across my mind a scheme by which we might easily identify ourselves with the brig. I aroused Harry, and told him not to be alarmed if I were away some time, and before the *Prairie Flower* had gathered much way upon her, the *Seagull* had caught up with her, and I clambered on board again. I ran to the wheel and put her before the wind, and presently with the freshening night breeze she was footing it to sea merrily enough on her last voyage. My plan was nothing more nor less than this. To let her run some miles out, and then scuttle her, for she carried nothing in the way of cargo, and was in such a leaky condition, that without someone to pump her she must have gone down very soon. I determined to bring her boat with me, and when we made the Australian coast to sink our whaleboat, and getting ashore in the other, to give out that we were the only survivors of the *Prairie Flower*. I found a large-sized auger in what, I suppose, had been the carpenter's quarters. I soon set to work, and when the morning light was creeping in, I left the brig to settle down, and to carry with her those who had come to such a tragic end. I took the precaution to bring back with me some suits of clothes and an old shovel, and taking the boat in tow I made for the shore again. When I looked back at the *Prairie Flower* I saw that I must have pierced her sides more often than I had thought, for already she was dipping deeply, and presently the water was flush with her rails. I lifted my cap, for I knew that her last hour afloat had come, and even as the prayer rose to my lips she sank steadily and slowly, sail by sail, as though she were some giant's coffin lowered by giant hands, and the flash of the sun on her topsails was the last that I saw of the ill-fated ship, and the end of my prayer was 'Peace to the quiet dead.' I reached the shore safely, and was glad to find Harry much better, and



"BRACING MY MUSCLES TO THEIR
UTMOST TENSION, I LIFTED IT"

with the old shovel I set to work and scooped out a hole and buried the bullion, and when I had covered it over, and made it look as natural as possible, Harry was standing beside me. 'What's the time?' he asked. 'Twelve o'clock exactly,' said I, looking at my watch. 'See!' said he. 'The shadow of the tree-top just touches the spot,' and presently he wrote the verses that I carry

about with me, telling where the bullion would be found, though when he spoke of dead mens' bones, he explained that it was only for effect. How little he knew that he was a true prophet!

"We were to sail next morning. I had made them all comfortable, and partly to think over the sudden fortune that had come to us, and to get a shot at any stray kangaroo, I struck off into the

Bush. I came back by way of the hill and looked out over the little bay, where the *Seagull* and the other boat lay, and then away across the roadstead on the other side of the promontory. There lay a smart-looking schooner heaving to

the swell that the sea-breeze had left. Forward, two or three men were leaning over the rails smoking, and I could see their police uniform plainly. Two other men were busied aft with a boat. What new trouble had come upon us? I hurried down to where I had left Harry and the children. The youngsters were some ten yards or so beyond where Harry lay, in a little clump of wattles. As I got near I heard the sound of a voice speaking in low tones, but the air was so clear and the evening so still that I recognised the speaker at once. It was Sheldon! I crept nearer and nearer, until I stood behind the trunk of a tree but a few feet from him. He was bending over Harry. 'And so my revenge will be complete!' he was saying. 'You'll swing for a bushranger, Somers, and I'll be there to see you turned off.' Harry's face was deadly white. The presence of the man who had brought all this evil upon him, seemed to have paralysed him, and not a word did he say. 'Speak! curse you,' said Sheldon. 'Say something, or I shall let the life out of you, here and now,' and he slipped a knife from his pocket and felt the point with his fingers. Mindful of the boat that lay in the cove beyond I dare not fire at him, but as I crouched for a spring my fingers touched a loose stone and tightened on it. It came away in my grasp, and with every word the wretch had uttered bracing my muscles to their utmost tension, I lifted it, and with one blow I crushed in his skull as though it had been an egg shell, and with a groan he rolled over and lay face upward beside Harry. I heard a low cry, and looking away from his awful face, I saw the elder child coming towards us. For a moment he stared at the man I

had killed. Then his heart sobbed out in one wild cry, 'Father! Father!' and he fell on the dead man's bosom."

Here the writing ended abruptly, but turning to the last leaf of the manuscript, I found pasted thereon a cutting from some newspaper, and beneath it some more writing, but so small that I had considerable difficulty in deciphering it. The cutting ran thus:—

"A strange story reaches us from Van Diemen's Land. Some time ago a Mr. Sheldon came out to Melbourne to open a bank. It appears he was particularly interested in the fate of a convict by the name of Somers, who from what we can gather, had inflicted some cruel wrong upon him. Mr. Sheldon had purchased a very smart boat, and on his way to Hobart Town called at Port Arthur, where he learnt that the night before the man Somers had escaped. Mr. Sheldon had passed a whaleboat in the early morning, and feeling convinced that this was how the convict had got away, he took some constables on board and gave chase. For some reason or other he came to anchor in a little bay near the mouth of the Pieman River and went ashore, and not having returned at nightfall, two of the constables went to look for him and found his clothes lying in a heap on the beach. It is surmised that the unfortunate gentleman went in for a bathe and was drowned; and, although the craft lay off the river's mouth for some time, nothing was seen of the body. A further melancholy interest is added to the event from the fact that there is every reason to believe that Mr. Sheldon's wife and children have perished at sea. It was well known that they were coming out to join him by the ship *Fulham*. That vessel is now some months overdue, and a boat has been found with a dead sailor in it and bearing the name *Fulham*."

The writing was as follows:—"We slipped away safely in the night, taking the jewels and two bars of gold. I buried Sheldon in the very hole where the bullion lay and left his clothes on the shore. Some papers that were in his pocket I have enclosed in the top of this casket, which, I have forgotten to say, I found on the *Prairie Flower*. With them I have placed another document which tells the story of the brig that brought us our treasure. We sank our whaleboat off Melbourne Heads, and took to the boat that bore the name of the ship I had scuttled, and we represented ourselves as the sole survivors of her passengers. Harry raised money enough on one of the gems to get a passage for himself and wife to England, though, of course, they travelled as strangers. I shall write directions, on the card on which Harry wrote his verses, for opening this casket, and I have arranged matters in such a way that, as far as human foresight can see, will bring the gold to Sheldon's children. Harry agreed that the bullion should be my share, as the jewels were worth an enormous sum. That we had a right to appropriate them will be seen by a perusal of the paper we found in the box. As I have said before, unless something untoward happens, this will never be read. I have written it to satisfy the longings of a lonely man. I shall devote the rest of my life to the bettering of the condition of those poor wretches consigned to the mercy of those who reign out here and rule in the name of the Law.

"Harry and Elsie tried to make me bring the children to England; but when I looked into her dear face I knew that I loved her more than ever; and her child's caress and the touch of the mother's lips will be the last caress and the last kiss I shall ever receive from woman or child in this world."

When I had finished reading this strange story I could see that Beresford was most deeply affected. But I must leave what he said and did, and also the account of what the other papers contained, for another occasion.

Some Interesting Shots.

BY DAYRELL TRELAWNEY.

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THERE is no subject more attractive and yet so difficult to treat as that of sport. In saying too little the reader remains unenthusiastic; a word too much, and the tales appear exaggerated. It is only the perusal of a mass of interesting unpublished matter, which has in one way and another come into my possession, that has made me decide to compile this record of some interesting shots. In doing so I have selected those incidents which are likely to prove of attraction to the general reader, whether from the prowess of the sportsman, the nature of the game, or the associations of the particular expedition recounted.

The first records that come to my hand date back to the days when the well-known firm of Purdey and Sons created a new era in the world of sport by the introduction of their renowned express rifle. It says much for the rifles of these makers that, although during the last thirty years muzzle-loaders have given place to breech-loaders, improvements have been made in cartridges, and much more powder is used now than in the beginning of the sixties, when the ordinary charge for a 40-bore (or, as we should now call it, a 500-bore) was about $2\frac{1}{2}$ drachms, the wonderful accuracy of their shooting, as evidenced in the following pages, is probably unsurpassed.

One of the most remarkable rifle shots of his day was the late Colonel Edward Thomson, C.S.I., who was known through the length and breadth of India as a



COLONEL THOMSON, C.S.I., ON HIS FAVOURITE ELEPHANT, "LUCHE"

keen sportsman. A favourite with the native princes, as well as in civil and military circles, he was always welcomed as a companion whenever any prospect of sport presented itself. His tall, well-knit figure, showing considerably above the howdah as, mounted on his favourite elephant "Luchmé," he would break through the masses of jungle-grass, rifle in hand, on the alert for big game, was a familiar sight throughout the Central Provinces.

When it became known that the Duke of Edinburgh would visit Oudh for some tiger-shooting, it was unanimously decided that Colonel Thomson should act as host and shikaree. During this time he kept, as was his custom, a rough shooting diary, of which, at the request of the Duke of Edinburgh, a few copies were printed for private circulation. An amusing incident occurred in connection with the proof-corrections of the diary. The Duke of Edinburgh, on his return voyage to England, wrote to Colonel Thomson, dating his letter from *H.M.S. Galatea*, as follows:—"I hope you won't forget to send me a copy of your account of the Terai shooting when completed." The type had been set up in England. Colonel Thomson, to avoid the delay of proofs being sent to India, telegraphed to his brother, Archbishop Thomson of York, begging him to correct the proofs and return them to the publisher. This request His Grace complied with, merely defending his position by the insertion of the following characteristic little note as Preface.

"The proofs of this pamphlet have been corrected by the brother of the writer, from whose ignorance of sporting matters some errors may have crept in."

To this diary I am indebted for the following record of the Duke of Edinburgh's clever handling of gun and rifle during his visit to the finest shooting country in India.

"The Duke," writes Colonel Thomson from the first night's camping-ground, "arrived this morning . . . without his luggage, which was left behind somehow on the road, and his sole belongings when he arrived here were, to use his own words, 'a pair of hair brushes and a bottle of soda water.'" With the Prince came Lord Charles Beresford, General Sir Neville Chamberlain, Sir Dighton Probyn and many others.

With the assistance of the Maharajah Sir Jung Bahadoor, Prime Minister and virtual ruler of Nepal, Colonel Thomson arranged probably one of the most remarkable tiger-hunts that has ever been witnessed by Europeans in India. As the details were conducted in purely Indian fashion, a short description may be of interest, including as it does the notes of a clever shot by the Duke of Edinburgh.

A line of no less than four hundred elephants was got together for the occasion, and the sight of this wonderful array of beasts all trained to act in concert at the sound of the bugle was truly unique and impressive. News having come in that a tiger had killed a buffalo in the night, the prospects of finding him in the course of the day seemed good. The Maharajah marched his elephants in single file circling round the great plain and including the outskirts of the forest. The subsequent manœuvring cannot be more graphically described than by the writer of the diary.

"When the circle was sufficiently near completion to cut the tiger off from his line of retreat, the elephants were halted and faced inwards by sound of bugle. The English sportsmen formed part of the cordon, and did not enter the forest, so they could see all that went on. At the next bugle sound, that side of the circle which was in the forest began to close in towards the centre, so as to sweep the tiger out of the tree-jungle if he were there. Few who saw that magnificent line of elephants come stealing out from under the great sal trees are likely to forget the sight. There was no noise, no shooting, nothing but the rustling of dry grass and the occasional crack of a broken branch, and as the edges of the forest were uneven, the elephants did not show all at once, but kept cropping out here and there in unexpected places, until the whole had emerged and the line was complete. At

this time the sight was very interesting and beautiful, for the circle was not less than eight hundred yards across, and the line of elephants could be seen for a great part of the circumference, their black hides and glistening white tusks in sharp contrast with the bright green foliage of the forest in the background. Into this magic circle," writes Colonel Thomson, "the Maharajah's elephant and mine now made their way, Sir Jung carrying the Duke in the front place of the howdah and the Maharajah taking the back seat in order to hand the Duke his guns, this being the Oriental mode of signifying his acknowledgments of the Prince's high rank. As we neared the centre of the pass the Duke's quick eye caught sight of the tiger, and we saw him trot leisurely across an open patch of turf and disappear in a deep and rugged watercourse. We now took our two elephants abreast into the thickest grass. The tiger did not wait, but sprang out to meet us with that half-grunt, half-roar that all tigers give when they mean mischief. After futile attempts to pass the wall of elephants, the tiger 'galloped round the ring roaring loudly, and lashing his tail like an angry cat on a large scale,' and finally took refuge in the long grass. Again we stirred him up," continues the diary, "and this time he was not to be trifled with. With no little dismay the tiger was seen to spring straight for the Duke's elephant; but before the full possibilities of the infuriated brute at close quarters with the Prince could be realised, and while the tiger was in the act of springing, the Duke, with commendable decision, dropped him neatly with a shot in the back."

How interesting the shot was to those in charge of the Prince's welfare may be well imagined.

A similar occurrence took place when the Duc d'Orleans was shooting in India, but with a less successful result, for, before he was able to discharge his gun, the tigress alighted on the howdah with a roar and a bound, dashing the firearm out of his hand while he was in the act of taking aim. The rifle was shown me on a recent visit to Stowe; stock and barrel were completely severed by the tremendous force of the blow. The tigress, handsomely mounted, is one of Duc's most valued trophies.

The Duke of Edinburgh tells the story of another shot connected with a still more narrow escape, a story which, in spite of a grim background, has a very amusing side to it. The Duke had an old servant who took a keen professional interest in the effect of the various weapons in use among sportsmen, being especially fond of digging the bullets out of dead game to see the form the lead might have taken. When the Duke was shot in the back in Australia, one of the first to enter the tent after the ball was extracted was, naturally enough, his old servant; the ruling passion came out strongly; his first request was to see the projectile just extracted in order to observe the effect produced on the bullet by his Royal Highness's backbone!

the before

4/2/70

A. R w p f l i e d e n .

Tigers	5
Leopard	1
Bare Singh	1
Spotted	1
Wild dog	1
Mustelid	32
Panther	37
Wild bear	9
Hare	41
Porcupine	09
Pea fowl	32
Jungle fowl	14
Flouren	4
Saiga	14
	<hr/> 907

26/2/70

1 Tiger
6 Chatter
4 Hog deer
9 Peafowl
2 Partridge
1 Hare
1 porcupine

[Signature]

In the concluding leaves of the diary I note a shot, more curious than useful.

The Duke of Edinburgh was shooting both deer and birds, and tired of changing his rifle for a shot gun so often, he tried the rifle at a peacock at about fifty yards, and sent a Henry shell right through him. Not a vestige of the peacock remained—a conclusive illustration of the powers of the shell.

"The Duke takes the greatest interest in the bag," writes Colonel Thomson, "and compiles the list himself, giving me the figures for my diary every evening." I give a reproduction of one day's bag, and also the game list for the week's shooting—in the Duke's handwriting. Before the royal guest took his leave, Colonel Thomson heard him described by the corporal of marines who accompanied his Royal Highness from the *Galatea*, in strict confidence, of course, as "a right down jolly fellow, who likes everyone to have his fun, and not to be put out along of 'im, and ready to rough it with the best of us," an opinion which everyone in camp could heartily endorse, and which, although "Prince Alfred" is now a reigning

sovereign, holds good to-day.

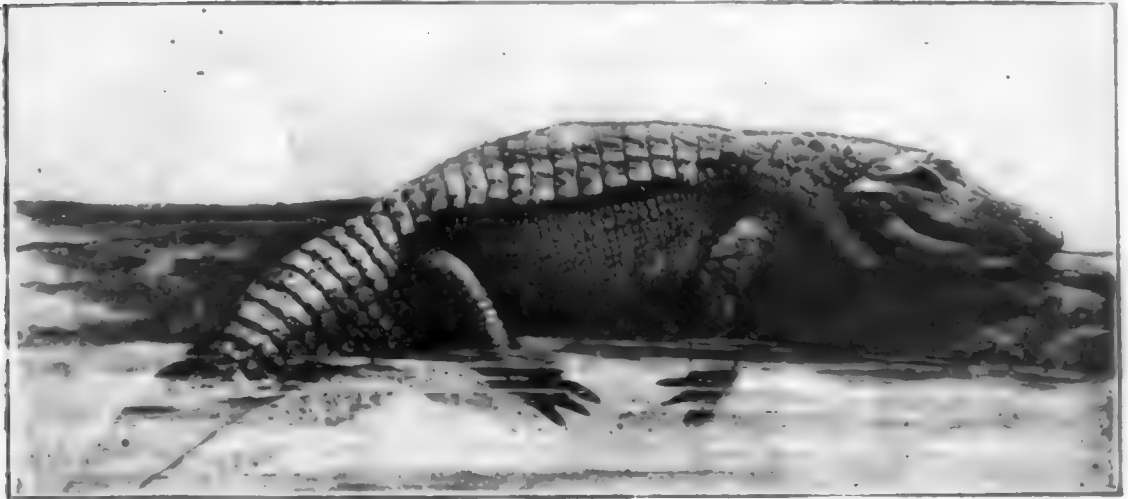
Alligators, like tigers, when hard pressed take to man-eating, and the difficulty of putting a bullet in the only vulnerable spot, the neck, as well as the *kudos* attaching to those who rid the river banks of these dangerous guests, makes them rank only second to



NOT TO BE TRIFLED WITH

tigers as *shikar* in India. Although it has been proved beyond dispute that the long-nosed, sharp-toothed alligator will eat men, it is not given to many sportsmen to shoot the big reptile in the act of dragging his human prey under water.

A Sepoy in the native police is responsible for the following remarkable shot. A camel-driver of the Maharajah of Bulrampoor was fording the stream near a temporary bridge, when an alligator seized him by the thigh, and dragged the man off towards deep water. The poor fellow called loudly for help, and a Sepoy who happened to be crossing the bridge, leaped into the river, and swam quickly after the brute and its prey. Then followed what must be considered a feat of unusual cleverness and promptitude. While in the water he took aim with his musket, and firing into the alligator at close quarters the beast released its victim. The man's life was saved, but some idea of the difficulty of killing an alligator will be gathered from the fact that—although the Sepoy closed with the great brute, drove his bayonet into him, fired three more shots and finally broke his musket over his antagonist's head—some English residents, who had been eye witnesses from the shore, assert that, when dragged out of the water, the alligator was still alive!



THE MAN-EATING ALLIGATOR

As the extracts from Colonel Thomson's diary contain, of necessity, little or no reference to his own exploits, and yet these include many a curious sporting experience and feat with gun and rifle, I give a few instances.

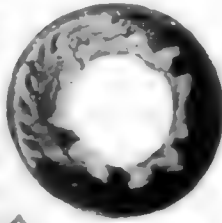
Great terror had been caused among the inhabitants of a small Indian hamlet by the presence, for many years, in the river which watered their village of a large man-eating alligator. First a child was dragged under water while bathing, then the wife of a poor coolie, and finally a woman of some position was attacked, carried off, and devoured by the man-eater. The wretched inhabitants were paralysed with terror, and hearing that Colonel Thomson was in camp not far from their neighbourhood, they sent a deputation to beg the great shikaree to come and rid them of the pest. It is needless to say that he did not require a second bidding. Starting along the banks of the river in the early morning, after a considerable wait, he caught sight of what, to the uninitiated, would have appeared like a cocoa-nut floating on the water, but what was in reality the alligator's nose. Colonel Thomson then proceeded to do what would have been a risky experiment, and probably a failure, if attempted by less of an expert. Taking aim at the water he fired, the bullet striking the great beast *under water* in the exact spot where alone he is vulnerable, just at the back of the neck. After the shot the brute disappeared, but in a few moments rose near the shore quite dead. To appreciate this shot at its true value, it must be remembered that not only is this vulnerable spot of small circumference, but that allowance had to



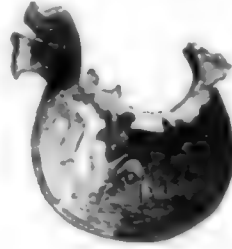
FOUND INSIDE A MAN-EATING ALLIGATOR

1. GOLD RING (LADY OF POSITION) 2. METAL RING 3. BANGLE IN TWO PIECES
4-5. CHILD'S BANGLE 6. ANOTHER BANGLE 7. EXTRA SIZE BANGLE

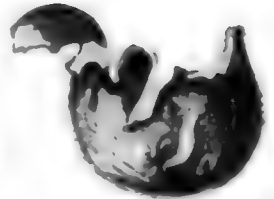
be made for the refraction caused by the bullet striking the water. When he was dragged ashore by the exultant natives, he was found to measure no less than twenty-two feet, fifteen feet being the average length of a full-grown specimen.



NO. 1.



NO. 2.



NO. 3.

COINS PIERCED BY RIFLE BULLETS

This shot was made with one of Purdey's 35-bore pin-fire breech-loading rifles at a distance of somewhat over a hundred yards. Then came the most remarkable part of all. On being anatomised the tokens of the fate of no less than five different individuals were found inside him, amongst others the child's tiny bangle, some larger bracelets belonging to a woman of the village, and finally the gold ring of the unfortunate native lady to whom I have already referred. These last are still in the possession of Mrs. Edward Thomson, by whose permission I am able to reproduce them for the benefit of readers of *THE LUDGATE*. To the same source I am indebted for my next illustration, which relates to what has always appeared to me one of the most remarkable rifle shots I have ever witnessed. On a two-shilling piece or other similar sized coin being thrown up in the air, I have seen Colonel Thomson raise his rifle and pierce the coin through the centre *without breaking the edge*. This feat he would accomplish with the greatest ease, not once, but several times running, discarding as "bad shots" coins in which the rim had been broken by the bullet!

An eminent personage who used to tell the story, which was received in polite silence, at last desisted until he had secured one of the coins as conclusive evidence of the fact; in the same way I should not care to make this record in print, even though it is a personal reminiscence, unsupported by reproduction of the actual coins. This shot was first performed with one of Purdey's 64-bore muzzle-loading rifles, and subsequently with other rifles by the same firm. Although it must be considered a feat dependent on a certain amount of acquired knack, its interest is heightened by the fact that the performer was equally good at target practice or running game.

I now come to the following extracts, which are from letters dating from camp, when the writer of them was having some rough shooting with Lord Mayo shortly before the Viceroy was murdered:—

"We found a big python snake eighteen feet long in the swamp; had a tremendous business with him; water two feet deep, mud a foot or two more, other snakes making off and only showing a coil above water. Shot had no effect, so I put a ball through his back; this stopped him, and he then got round the root of a tree under water, and nothing we could do would dislodge him. A rope put round him was dragged by an elephant; when I took the rope in hand I was being pulled out of the howdah, and had to let go. Tremendous strength the brute showed. At last we got at his head and put a bullet through his neck; we then dragged him out of the swamp in triumph. A monster; eighteen feet long and the same number of inches round the middle."

It should be added that the snake was empty, and therefore when distended with a meal his size must have been appalling.

In a second extract we read the following amusing account of a good but unnecessary shot:—

"A long, heavy, and fatiguing beat along the Neona Nala, which winds through thick forests for miles and then comes out on a clear space. Beautiful ferns on the bank on either side, but no tiger. Near sundown we gave it up as a bad job and began to shoot deer, when out came a fine tigress on the grass plain

three hundred yards in front of us. She turned, looked at us, gave a growl of defiance, and bolted like a hare across the grass. Then there was a stampede! The Viceroy made for the forest, and our elephants had some five hundred yards to go at best pace. Finally the tigress disappeared into the same green patch out of which she had come. I felt sure she was there, though, personally, I had not seen her go in. His Excellency said, 'Has she gone on?' I replied, 'She is in this grass and has about three minutes more to live.' There was breathless silence, then a roar, and out she came across the stream into the middle of our elephant line, and was cut down before she got well up the bank. Then came the amusing part of the whole affair. M——, arriving on the scene when the tigress was dead, fired a clever shot into the carcase, thinking she was crouching for a spring! There was great chaff."

This letter adds: "Lord Mayo is never tired, and ready to peg away all day. He is very genial and jolly. When we dropped our tigress to-day as she was charging at his elephant, he said, 'Oh, I am so sorry! I *do* want to see a tiger get on one of our elephants!'"

The Viceroy on this occasion had such good sport (a bag of eleven tigers in less than that number of days) that it was arranged that he should again visit the same ground. It was with universal grief that, having at the last moment postponed his intended shooting party, he went south, only to meet with his untimely death at the hands of a murderer at a period when his presence could ill be spared to the Indian nation. Major Bourke, a brother of Lord Mayo, was also known in India as a sportsman, and a genial and pleasant companion in camp and field. Another member of the same family, Lady Eva Wyndham Quin, had a great reputation as a clever shot.



A ROYAL TIGER

By permission of Messrs. Purdey and Sons

An amusing instance of a mistake in a telegram occurred when Lady Eva wired home from India, "Shot a fine tiger," and the message was altered in transit into "Shot five tigers." With this truly remarkable bag she has ever since been credited by the Press. Indeed, a newspaper cutting lies before me in which the number is raised to six.

A bullet glancing from a tree is a frequent and often a very dangerous occurrence; but it is, I should say, a fairly rare shot that passes *through* a tree, killing the object aimed at on the other side. This was accomplished by the owner of a Purdey rifle, who afterwards photographed both the tree and the tiger where he lay, sending a print of the photo to Mr. Purdey, in whose possession it still remains and by whose kind permission I am able to reproduce it. The tree was a mere sapling, but the interest in the shot is not lessened by this fact. The rifle used was a Purdey 500-bore express, which also brought down the fine leopard and tiger for the reproduction of which I am indebted to the same source.

A clever rifle-shot is H.R.H. the Comtesse de Paris. Endless are the trophies that adorn the walls of Stowe House, while not a few of the heads of game fell to Madame's own gun. From the vast forest of the Domaine d'Eu in Normandy come many of the fine specimens of wild boar which formerly adorned the great central hall of the Chateau, in the days when the late Comte de Paris and his family lived in peace and happiness on their historical estates. At the *rendez-vous-de-chasse*, first and foremost were her Royal Highness and the Duc de Chartres.

Not long before the edict of exile was made law, the Comtesse de Paris, during a day's hunting in the Foret d'Eu, brought down a fine wild boar with a very clever shot, and a photograph was taken to commemorate the event. A single print was in the possession of her Royal Highness who, in showing it to me, mentioned that she did not believe that there were any others in existence. An additional interest is thus given to the portrait, from the certainty that it has never before been reproduced. This photograph shows the Comtesse de Paris in her shooting dress, with the Foret d'Eu in the background, and her favourite dog at her feet.

Among remarkable shots of recent years, no one has held a greater reputation than the late Maharajah Duleep Singh. Few will forget his extraordinary record of 780 birds to his own gun in one day's shooting at Elveden Hall, his own estate. It must be added that, although good at straight aiming, the Maharajah owed his reputation more especially to the fact that he was a marvellously quick shot. No man living could raise his gun, aim, and fire in such an incredibly short space of time as himself.

Latterly the *professional* shot has gained favour with the public. Colonel Cody has shown us many a new and clever feat of using a gun on horseback, and his imitators have been many. The feat of piercing the coin before referred to has been achieved with success by Dr. Carver, the American sharp-shooter; glass balls have been broken by hundreds, and bullets have been divided by hitting the edge of a knife. But, great as has been the undoubted skill shown in these performances, they have not always signified that the performers were good all round sporting shots. Dr. Carver, it will be remembered, tried his powers against some of our crack shots at the Prize Meetings at Wimbledon, and failed absolutely.

A word in conclusion on the subject of sporting diaries and game-books. The practice of keeping a regular private record of pleasant sport enjoyed from one year's end to another cannot fail to be of interest to the writer and his personal friends. Many a good day in field and covert, hill-side and river bank, is lived over again as the diary leaves are scanned, or the game-book opened.

In these days of publicity and self-advertisement, when the biggest bag of game and the best Press notices are too often the only results aimed at, we seem to have lost much of the true spirit of sensible, manly sport for sport's sake.

The late Lord Malmesbury, a grand old sportsman, kept a journal from 1801 to 1840, a record of thirty-nine shooting seasons on his estate of Heron Court. This diary included a precise statement of the game he killed, the quantity of powder and shot he used, the distances he walked, and the time he was out! It has been calculated that, during the thirty-nine seasons' shooting, Lord Malmesbury walked a distance of 36,200 miles, or nearly once and a half of the circumference of the globe!

Still there remain to us many genuine lovers of sport whose records are kept with almost as much care. Two of the most interesting game-books I know are those of Lord Cairns and of Sir John Fowler, Bart. In the former are entered minutely every day's shooting, the bag obtained, number of guns, &c., interspersed by clever pen-and-ink sketches by the owner, who is one of the best shots of the present day. The second game-book gives details of the annual game-bag at Braemore, from which noted deer-forest Landseer drew many of his inspirations, enhancing the value of this interesting book by his original pencil drawings, while Sir John Millais, General Crealock, and many others, have followed his example.

From the nature of this article it has been impossible to include the names of many of our greatest shots. All such records as these must, owing to restrictions of space, deal very superficially with the subject in hand. If, however, I have succeeded in passing on to others some share of the pleasure I have felt myself in the perusal of many interesting sporting journals and game-books, the end which I have had in view will have been achieved.



THE COMTESSE DE PARIS IN SHOOTING COSTUME.

Rustan.

AN ARMENIAN STORY.

BY THE REV. CANON WOOD, D.D.

CHAPTER I.

“**A**H, Mariam! Surely you are unreasonable. For how many years have you not been the light of my eyes, the keeper of my heart! Ever since we first met at the summer-camp in the hills have I been constant to your sweet image. You were but a little child of ten, and I remember, as if it were only yesterday, how your mother held you up from the ground that you might gather with your own hands a peach from the tree that overhangs the mill-stream, and you put out both your hands and plucked two. ‘*Allah kerim!*’ cried the old miller Ibrahim—‘*Allah kerim!*’ how grasping these Christians be!’ But when you held one of them out to me, he laughed still louder. And your mother did not like it, and said: ‘Mariam! if Ibrahim had wished to give Mikhel of his fruit, could he not have done it himself?’ But what did you answer her? ‘Mother, I will give Ibrahim his peach again if he thinks me greedy, and Mikhel shall have mine.’ Do *you* remember that?”

“It were hard,” said the person addressed, turning her head aside and looking down the valley as if in quest of something; “it were hard if childhood’s fancies were to be brought up against a girl for ever!” But as she spoke her dark cheek reddened a little, though apparently not with anger.

“Nay,” pleaded the young man, “I go not back to the fleeting impressions of a child, as if they were bound to linger when childhood is past and gone. As well might I seek to fix yon bars of gold and purple that gather in the western sky and change in shape and colour every moment. But I, Mariam, I was not a child then, neither am I one now. And surely the patient devotion of years might merit somewhat more than as yet you have given me. I am now five-and-twenty. I have been a deacon these seven years, and, were it not that Uncle Gauriel finds me useful to himself and would be loth to lose me from his secretariat, he would, ere now, have given me the charge of one of our mountain churches; and that thou knowest”—he stole a glance at her as he spoke—“would almost make it necessary for me to marry.”

Perhaps we had better pause here and introduce the speakers.

There was nothing in the appearance or garb of the young man who had called himself a deacon to betoken an ecclesiastic. Were it not for the turban of dark stuff wrapped round the conical hat of the mountaineer, he might have been taken for any young shepherd of Kurdistan. A short jacket of blue, embroidered in various devices but much worn, a shirt open at the throat and chest, wide trousers gathered in below the knee, from which to the ankle the legs were swathed in tight strips of vari-coloured linen, felt shoes bound to the foot with leather thongs—such were the chief parts of his dress. Round the waist was a long girdle of red silk, into which (for a man has to guard his own life in the East) was thrust a khanjar or dagger. Black hair and eyes, with the complexion of a Southern Italian. Such was the general appearance of Mikhel the deacon. He stood with one foot on a projecting fragment of rock, leaning on his iron-shod staff, and looked eagerly at his companion, who still turned her face towards the gorge below, from which in the pause came clear the roar of the torrent on its way to join the Zab.

She was a pretty sight to gaze upon, and so Mikhel thought as she sat there

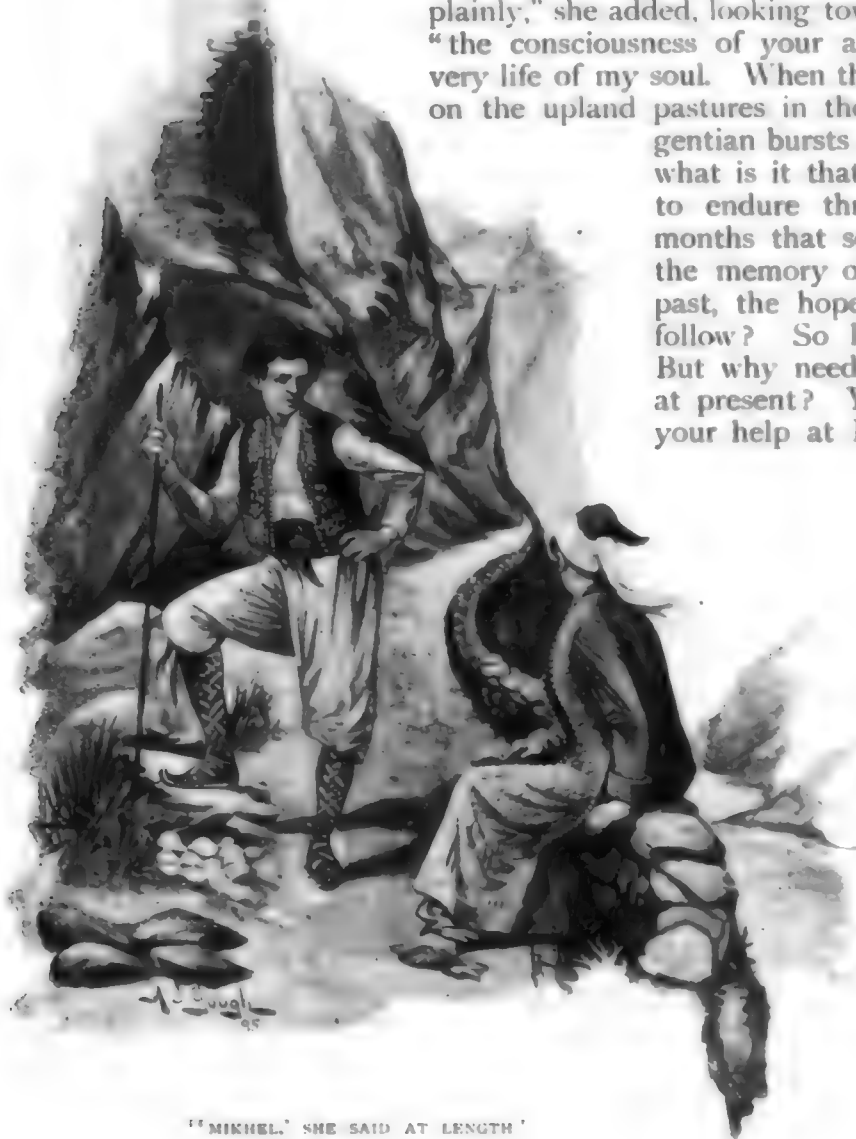
on some rough stones carelessly put together as a wall to make the path safer for the mules. In complexion the girl was somewhat fairer than her lover, perhaps from leading a life of less exposure to the sun. Her eyes were deep grey, almost blue in colour—a shade which, however pleasing to Europeans, is not generally admired by Syrians. One bare foot, brown and hard, but shapely, showed itself beneath the wide scarlet trouser; the other was hidden by her dress. An embroidered coat, not unlike that of the young man, but longer, descended to the knee, and was adorned with bright metal buttons. A waistcoat without collar revealed a bright-coloured shirt beneath, and her small head was covered by a red fez cap, completely concealing the hair, and having a few folds of spotlessly white muslin twisted round it, the ends falling behind the neck. Yes, a pretty object she presented, as she sat there on the wall, and I will not say that she was unconscious of the fact.

Anyhow, she remained some moments—it seemed to him a very long time—before she answered the deacon's question.

"Mikhel!" she said at length, turning towards him, "I am not unconscious of your long service. I am not ungrateful for it. Nay, I would not diminish ought of the love that you have shown for me these many years. And, I tell you plainly," she added, looking towards the western sky, "the consciousness of your affection has been the very life of my soul. When the snow begins to melt on the upland pastures in the spring, and the blue gentian bursts out beneath the olives, what is it that has given it courage to endure through the long winter months that solitary life? Is it not the memory of the summer that is past, the hope of that which is to follow? So has it been with me. But why need there be any change at present? Your uncle still needs your help at Rowandiz. My father cannot do without me at Sidaka. And, besides——" She paused.

"Besides what?" he demanded impetuously. "Am I to wait till that young Ashiret's father come again, and try to bribe your father's consent to your betrothal? How can I tell but what Yonan may give way to his promises, or to his threats? And then——"

"And then," she said calmly, "you know his daughter



"MIKHEL," SHE SAID AT LENGTH.

would not. Yonan is not poor, but if he were, no bribe would tempt him to force my inclinations; and think you, Mikhel, that if I ask you not to press your suit, I would listen for a moment to that of Reshid Aga?"

She held her hand out to him as she spoke, with an involuntary expression of affection. The young man seized it hastily, and raised it to his lips.

"But what is it you were going to say?" he asked. "I do not press for our immediate marriage. I only want your promise that it shall be ere long. Next spring, perhaps?" he added, hesitatingly. "Why did you say 'besides'?"

"Ah, Mikhel!" she sighed, "when I think of the hard life we Christians have to live under our Turkish governors, how at one time the Pasha's weakness hands us over to the Kurds, at another his rapacity leads him to lay still heavier burdens upon us, I am often tempted to despair of the future, to think that this is not a time for marrying and giving in marriage; that those who are single had better remain as they are till happier times shall come. Is there not something like this in what the Prophet said to Gehazi, 'Is this a time——'" She stopped.

"Nay," said the deacon with a smile, "you mistake there. You are thinking of what the blessed Paul says of his times, which must have been something like ours, I often think. But as to gold and silver and vineyards and oliveyards, may I be forgiven, but I think it would be a blessed thing if we had a few more of them, or if, at all events, others would leave us to enjoy those we have got!"

He laughed aloud at his own so daring wish.

"You may laugh," replied Mariam, quietly, "but I heard this morning, from a Christian merchant who passed up our valley towards the Persian frontier, that the Pasha is expected to impose a new tax on the district before he leaves Rowandiz for Mosul."

"Impossible!" cried the deacon. Already we are ground to the dust by his exactions and by the usury of the Jewish money-lenders. But talk no more of this. I must be on my way home, for the sun is sinking rapidly, and the Bishop will wonder what has become of his deacon if I am not there by the time of 'Hail, Gladdening Light.' If I hear anything bearing on the merchant's story I will let you and Yonan know. Farewell!"

He kissed her hand, once, twice, and thrice; then, with the practised step of the mountaineer, plunged down the steep descent towards Rowandiz. The girl watched him as he sprang from point to point, now lowering himself by the dwarf oak branches, now dislodging the stones in the dry water-course, now leaning back on his iron-shod staff upon the steep greensward, till he reached the level of the road. Then he turned, as if confident he should see the girl again, waved his hand cheerfully in answer to her salutation, and was soon lost to her sight.

Mariam rose with a sigh and slowly began the ascent towards her own home.



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"WAVED HIS HAND CHEERFULLY"

CHAPTER II.

THE sun had just set beyond the valley of the Zab, and the mountains through which the Akra torrent rushes on its westward course threw their dark shadows on the gorge in which Rowandiz lies, as the deacon approached the gate. High up against the blue sky, behind him, one lofty, snow-clad peak glowed rosy in the light, but the streets of the town were filling with black shadows as Mikhel entered. Hastily returning the salaam of the gatekeeper, the deacon pressed onward towards the Christian quarter. Here and there a pariah dog skulked by, or lay down on a heap of dust and refuse in some safe corner. As he passed the Hassaneen mosque he heard the quavering voice of the old mueddin chanting the sunset call to prayer; and when he drew near the Bishop's house, hard by the church of the Apostle Mar Adai, he caught the last notes of the wooden semantron, or sound-board, which calls Christians in Eastern countries to their long and wearying services. Mikhel hurried with all speed up a narrow lane, the houses on each side of which almost met overhead, and, stooping his head, entered a low doorway, grimy with smoke and dirt, which led into a gloomy passage. At the further end of this a second door gave admission into a cavernous room, quite dark, through which, with the unhesitating manner of one who knew the locality well, the deacon groped his way and shortly emerged into the Christian church.

Vespers had already began, and Bishop Gauriel, wearing his pectoral cross, sat in his chair in the presbytery outside the high screen. The opening hymn for the night service had just ended, and by the light of the wax taper which he held in one hand, a black-turbaned priest was reciting the collects with extended arms, standing at a large lectern inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Over his head and shoulders he wore the *shamlah*, a long band of linen embroidered with crosses in red, one end hanging down his back and the other passed round the face. Some collects and psalms having been chanted, one of the deacons recited the Litany for the evening. The congregation, which was all composed of men and boys, then crowded up to the Bishop, who placed his right hand on the head of each and gave his blessing. Mikhel came up in his turn and knelt before his uncle. He noticed, as he did so, that the old man seemed strangely moved, and attributed it in his mind to his having been missed from the service. Soon, however, as the congregation began to disperse he became aware that something unusual had occurred. Several of the older men gathered in groups near the door and engaged in earnest conversation, and he noticed that Awishalum, the sacristan, delaying to put out the lamps which hung from the dark rafters of the roof, gave a hasty message to each of them in turn. Meeting Mikhel on his way through the nave, he whispered to him also, "His Holiness would see you in the mandarah instantly."

A narrow flight of steps, dimly lighted by a wick in a lamp of earthenware, led from the narthex of the church to the upper room where the Bishop had already taken his seat on a raised platform at the further end. Gauriel himself occupied the place of honour—the right-hand corner of the *dewan*. On the cushions by his side, right and left of him, were placed Awishalum the sacristan, Rabban Makarius the head priest, and others, both of the clergy and lay Christians, whom Mikhel recognised by the light of a bronze three-beaked chandelier which hung from the ceiling. In front of the Bishop sat some of the deacons on their heels upon the carpet with which the dais was covered, leaving, however, a space in front of him. At the lower end of the room, his body slightly inclined forward, stood the Bishop's pipe-bearer, holding the long cherry stick with its amber mouthpiece, and gazing reverentially at his master.

"Nay, Stephan," said Gauriel, looking at the servant. "Take away the shibook. Thou needst not to wait. I will call when I want thee."

The man bowed, his right hand laid on his bosom, and retired.

Then the Bishop, after beckoning Mikhel to sit at his feet, began to speak.

"Tell us now," he said, turning to a thick-bearded man of about fifty years old who sat on his right—"tell us, Nikodemos, what thou hast heard concerning this new oppression of our people. Is it of a truth that some further tax is about to be laid upon us? Is it not enough that we pay for our own heads, our buffaloes, our cows and our vineyards? And that, too, when the last vintage was so unfruitful that with many it was but a poor gleanings of the grapes, hardly a vintage at all! Tell us if thou knowest aught for certain?"

"Your Holiness is aware," said the person addressed as Nikodemos, with a profound inclination to Bishop Gauriel, "that for some time past there have been rumours of a new caprice on the part of the Pasha. Surely it is not without cause that the Psalmist saith of one whom it is the Divine will to punish, 'Set thou an ungodly man to be ruler over him.' What may be in Abdallah's mind I know not, but Shimun, the son of Nimrud, who hath a brother among the running syces of the Governor, tells us that the enemy of our religion, Yakoob the Jew physician, hath often been summoned to his presence of late. Methinks this bodes some evil to us."

"Yea," said Gauriel; "but why not to the Jews also? Abdallah hates the Jews only less than the Christians. Still, I like not those frequent visits. It seems to me that Yakoob hath some knowledge of the Pasha's intentions."

"Beware of a cow sideways, of a mule backwards, of a Jew all ways." It was Awishalum the sacristan who spoke.

"Did Shimun say aught," enquired Makarius, "of Yakoob's countenance when he left the presence-chamber? Was it cheerful or downcast? Surely ye may read oftentimes, as in a book, what passeth in the heart."

"Yea," replied Nikodemos, "and it was from that, in great measure, that I augured mischief. When Yakoob was first sent for, he came—so saith Shimun's brother—with as sad a countenance as if he had lost ten *tomans* in a bargain. But after the last visit his face was bright when he crossed the court, and he felt in his purse as though he would have given somewhat to the porter; but, alas! he seemed not to find a coin small enough to satisfy his Jewish covetousness."

A brief pause ensued. Then Mikhel stood up and, with an obeisance to the Bishop, asked permission to speak.

"Surely," replied his uncle. "'Wisdom,' as the wise man saith, 'is comely in old age;' but yet again, 'Wisdom is grey hairs to the young.' Speak, Mikhel, if thou knowest anything of this trouble or canst advise aught."

"Nay, your Holiness, it is not for me to advise. But what I have heard this day it were well to tell you."

And he briefly recounted what he had learnt of the merchant's story, though he did not think himself bound to say where or from whom he had heard it.

"It is only too plain," said the Bishop, "that some scheme is afoot for our injury, and I connect it in some way with the malice of the Jews. What it may be God only knows. The question is, how it were best to combat it."

A long and anxious conversation followed, and in the end it was decided that Gauriel himself, with two or three others, should pay a visit of compliment to the Pasha next day in view of his approaching departure from Rowandiz, when they might reasonably expect to hear something further, and, perhaps, might be able to avert the mischief, whatever it might be, that was in store for them. So the council broke up.

"Ah, Mikhel!" exclaimed Gauriel, as he leaned heavily on his shoulder while the deacon led him to his sleeping room—"ah, Mikhel! thou knowest not the cares which age brings with it, and the sacred office which I hold. How gladly would I have a mind so free from anxiety as thine! Surely the pillow of the young knows no care for the morrow."

They had reached the sleeping closet of the old Bishop, and his servant, who preceded them, had placed the lamp which he carried upon a marble shelf in a

recess facing the door, and was now occupied in laying down the mattress on the floor and arranging the sheets and pillows which constituted the simple arrangement for his master's repose.

"I pray, your Holiness, do not forbode evil," said the deacon, though his heart sank within him as he thought of the fresh difficulties which the threatened danger might put in the way of the realisation of his own happiness. "'The sun shines brighter when the cloud is past,' as saith the poet, 'and the bulbul needs no new song.'"

So saying he knelt at the threshold for his uncle's blessing, and then made the best of his way to his own apartment.

CHAPTER III.

THE September sun had risen a good two hours above the serrated ridge of

Sheikh Iva, and in the hot Hassa-neen Square the shadow of the graceful minaret, as of some

huge gnomon, was moving inch by inch along the northern side. Already the seller of melons and lupins by the great door of the mosque had twice moved his little stand to get the benefit of the changing shade, and the chess-players, leaving the raised platform of the coffee-house opposite, had started a new game in the cooler chamber below. The crowd which had filled the market at sunrise was thinning rapidly, and the cries of hawkers of fresh and dried fruit were



"A STRING OF MULES"

more rarely heard. One solitary water-carrier, the black goatskin strapped to his shoulders, was toiling along and clinking his brass cup against the spout to remind thirsty bystanders of his useful occupation, while a string of mules, preceded by their muleteer, and loaded with fresh-cut forage from the cooler mountain district, was disappearing in the cloud of dust kicked up in the unwatered street as they made their way towards the Pasha's stables.

"By Allah!" said the coffee-house keeper, who had just refilled the pipes of the two chess-players as well as his own, and had taken his seat on an upturned basket near the entrance for the double convenience of attending to the wants of his guests and of watching all that took place in the street—"by Allah, but some strange thing is about to happen!"

"What aileth thee, Abou-Seer?" asked one of the players, as he moved his piece to give check to his adversary. "Can anything that is new happen in Rowandiz? Surely if one took a journey to Sarandib, like Sindibad, or to the furthest country of the Feringhis (whom may Allah destroy!), and were to abide there for a hundred years, he would find all things here as when he left them."

"That may be," said Abou-Seer, "with us of the true religion. Blessings on our Lord Mohammad! we have nothing new to learn. Surely if one day be good, no need is there to change it. The pearl is as white now as it will be to our children's children. But what say'st thou of these Nazarenes who live among us. Are they not always plotting something evil? And, if my eyes deceive me not, I see a company of them even now approaching from the street of the market with their chief Imam at their head, him they call the Bishop."

The chess-player did not leave his place. His thoughts were more occupied with his game than with anything that Abou-Seer had told him. Two or three moves were made in silence. At length, taking a copious draught of smoke into his mouth and slowly puffing it out with raised head in the direction of the window, he replied, sententiously:—

"Think not to extract sugar from the colocynth, for it will taste like its origin."

"Tell us," said the other player, who wore the green turban which marks a descendant of the Prophet—"tell us, Abou-Seer, what more thou observest."

"I see them clearly now; may they not escape Jehanum! I see Gauriel and that young deacon, Mikhel, and there follow them Makarius, and others whom I know not. And see! they are speaking to the porter at the palace opposite. Now, by the beard of the Prophet! he will surely not admit them! If I know ought of Abdallah-ul-Hadji, he would rather have a visit from the stoned fiend himself than from these black-turbaned Nazarenes!"

It was true, however. For some reason which the coffee-house keeper could not divine, the porter seemed to have had orders to admit the Christians. A wicket-door was flung open, and Abou-Seer could perceive several of the Pasha's servants, who had been lying on the mastabah or stone seat beneath the archway, rise and fall into line on each side as Gauriel entered.

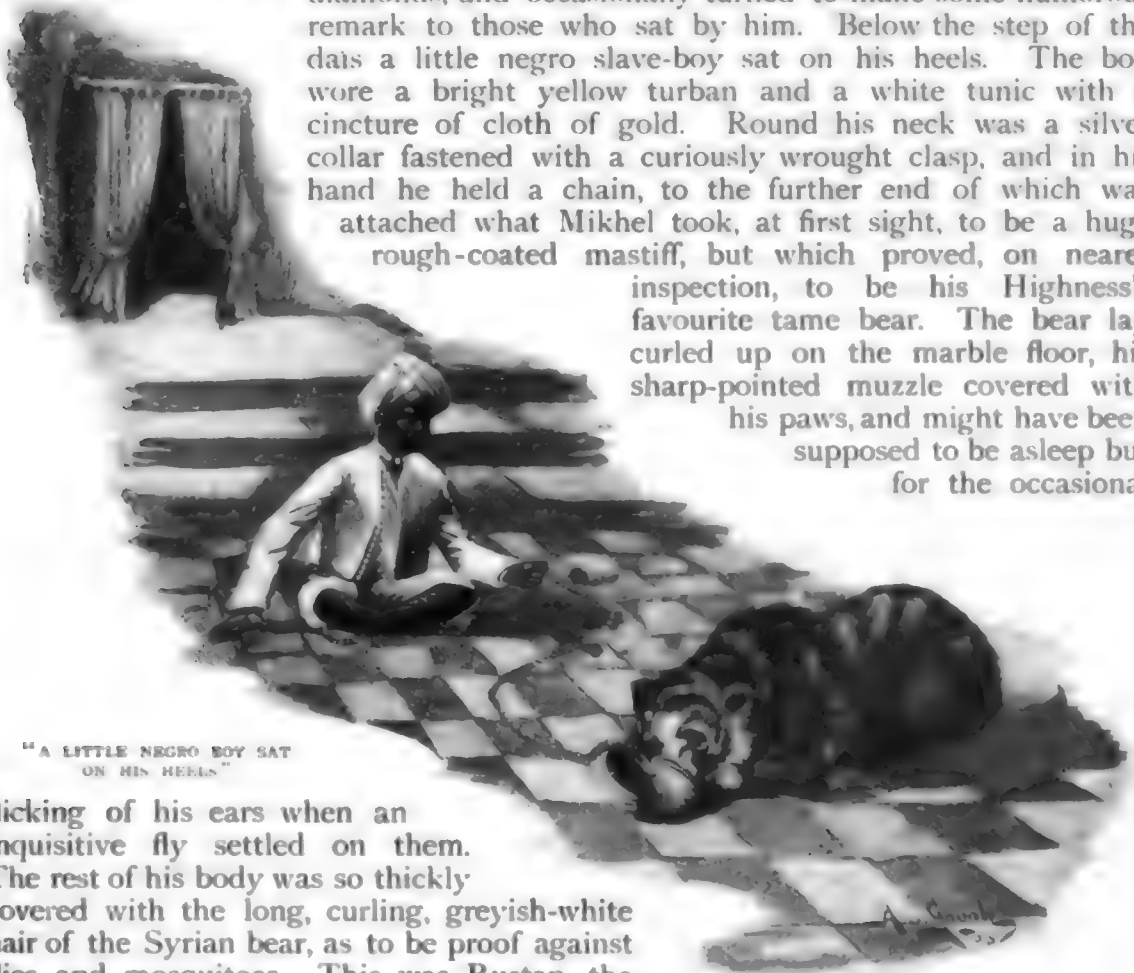
Let us enter with him and see what reception he met with.

The passage in which the Bishop and his companions found themselves did not lead straight into the court, as would have been the case in a European house of equal pretensions, but, following the Eastern principle of securing privacy from passers-by, turned somewhat to the right and then to the left before it opened out into the great court. Above it were rooms for servants. To the left of the buildings were the stables where Gauriel saw the syces busily unpacking and disposing of the loads of grass just deposited by the weary mules. The muleteer, a stalwart, long-limbed Ashiret from the mountains, recognised the Bishop and signed himself from right to left in token of brotherhood in the faith, when he thought his action would be unobserved by the Mussulmans. Passing by a deep well in the centre of the square, near which stood two or three old brass field-pieces backed up by a pile of round shot, and leaving on the right the large white-washed buildings containing the women's apartments, the party were conducted to a flight of steps leading into a cloister where several Turkish soldiers in semi-European uniform, but wearing the red fez, were lounging about while two smarter looking sentries paced backwards and forwards on their beat. The cloister gallery gave admission to an inner court of smaller dimensions, and beautifully paved with marble. Rose trees, cassia, citron and orange trees, and other shrubs, diversified the enclosure and shed fragrance on the air, while an exquisite fountain, decorated with arabesque patterns in pottery of various colours, threw up a light jet of water which fell with a graceful plash into its basin and was then conducted in tiny rivulets of baked brick from one garden bed to another. From time to time a flight of tame pigeons swooped down from the surrounding roofs or cooed and bowed to one another on the marble pavement. Mikhel, who had never seen the interior of the palace before, gazed with wonder and admiration at each object which presented itself. His uncle was far too much occupied with gloomy misgivings. He had no eye for anything but the terrible Pasha.

Yet there was nothing very alarming in his appearance, at all events. A big,

jovial-looking man, with a reddish beard and blue eyes, and a complexion inherited from his Georgian slave-mother, reclined on soft embroidered cushions in the corner of a large room opening on the court, whose high roof was painted in stripes of brilliant colours. Two or three marble steps gave admission to it from the lower level, and another step, in front of which lay a score of yellow and red slippers, marked the special place of honour for those who were worthy to be admitted to the Governor's more immediate presence. The owners of the slippers sat cross-legged on the divan, and some black slaves were serving coffee in tiny china cups enclosed in filagree work of silver. The Pasha himself was not drinking coffee. He was smoking a priceless narghilé with amber mouthpiece set in diamonds, and occasionally turned to make some humorous remark to those who sat by him. Below the step of the dais a little negro slave-boy sat on his heels. The boy wore a bright yellow turban and a white tunic with a cincture of cloth of gold. Round his neck was a silver collar fastened with a curiously wrought clasp, and in his hand he held a chain, to the further end of which was attached what Mikhel took, at first sight, to be a huge rough-coated mastiff, but which proved, on nearer inspection, to be his Highness's favourite tame bear. The bear lay curled up on the marble floor, his sharp-pointed muzzle covered with his paws, and might have been supposed to be asleep but for the occasional

fllicking of his ears when an inquisitive fly settled on them. The rest of his body was so thickly covered with the long, curling, greyish-white hair of the Syrian bear, as to be proof against flies and mosquitoes. This was Rustan, the Pasha's pet companion in his leisure hours, and on whom it was said he used to lavish more attentions than fell to the lot of even the most favoured inmates of his harem.



"A LITTLE NEGRO BOY SAT
ON HIS HEELS"

Meanwhile, as the Christian party halted at the entrance of the presence chamber, one of a group of attendants, who stood at the further end of the room out of earshot of the company on the divan, stepped forward and salaamed to the ground before the Pasha, signifying their approach.

"Let the dogs enter!" was his rude and uncourteous answer. Then, turning to his companions, he added, "by Allah! they look like a flock of hungry crows. See they swoop not on thy sweetmeats, Selim!"

The person addressed, a slight, effeminate-looking Turk, who, leaning back on the cushions, was slowly feeding himself with *rahat-la-kum* from a silver saucer in his left hand, made a significant gesture of contempt with his disengaged fingers, as he answered:—

"The raven once flew into the hawk's nest, but he left his own feathers there. I doubt not your Highness is more than a match for the Nuzranis."

"Inshallah!" exclaimed the Governor, "but I could have wished Yakoob had been here to see how downcast they be! Surely some rumour must have reached them of his kind suggestions. Dost thou think their magic would suffice for that?"

"Nay, I know not," said the other. "But, methinks, their jinns cannot treat them well or they would find some way to escape your Highness's little turns of the screw as well as know how to foretell them. But, see! their old Imam asks permission to speak."

It was so. Gauriel had long been watching anxiously Abdallah's features for some sign that he might address him.

The Pasha nodded unceremoniously. Gauriel bent himself to the ground and pressed his right hand to his breast and forehead.

"Pasha!" he said, "the days are shorter, and soon the snows will begin to whiten our mountains. And as the sun hides himself behind Jebel Maklab when he sets over the western plains and the great rivers, so is the brightness of your Highness's presence withdrawn from us for the long winter months."

"By Allah!" cried the Pasha, interrupting him, as the old man bowed again till his white beard almost touched the ground—"a truce to these compliments! What is the cause why you have asked this interview? To the point, Bishop!"

Gauriel seemed cowed by the Pasha's abruptness, and looked helplessly at Makarius.

"Your Highness," said the latter, taking up the discourse, and giving an encouraging glance to the Bishop, "we have asked permission to pay our respects——"

"And something besides, I hope," whispered Selim to the Pasha, who seemed convulsed with laughter for a moment, and was then seized with a violent fit of coughing.

"Come, that is more practical," gasped Abdallah. "Is that all, Christian?"

"To pay our respects," resumed Makarius, firmly, "before your Highness leaves us for Mosul, and to assure your Brightness that he leaves behind him no more faithful seryants and subjects of our lord the Sultan—whom Allah preserve!—than the Christians in Rowandiz."

"H'm," said the Pasha. "Inshallah! we were hard to please if we quarrelled with such noble sentiments. And for yourself," he added, looking at the tall figure and broad shoulders of the man whom he addressed, "I would I had among my guards as serviceable men as some that I see before me"—here his eye rested for a moment on Mikhel. "Truly our master is ill-served when he gets but the capitation tax for some I know. Islam might be better able to spare the *haraj* than the strong arms of many of your Nuzranis."

There was something sinister in the compliment, and still more in the covert smile which accompanied it. Makarius only bowed. Some of the Pasha's guests began to show signs of interest and amusement. Selim's eyes twinkled with his appreciation of the great man's humour. He saw the *dénouement* was approaching. Meanwhile poor old Gauriel had recovered his composure.

"Your Highness," he said, "Makarius has spoken well. We all are faithful subjects of the Padishah, and seeing that Islam allows us not to serve the Sultan in the field, to say nothing of the sacred functions which some of us discharge in our community, we gladly pay the *haraj* for exemption; and yet oftentimes, such is our poverty, we can scarcely find the money."

"That," replied Abdallah, "is a matter to be settled with the *defterdar*. But how comes it, Bishop, that Christians are ever in want of gold when they have jinns at their service as useful as the lamp of Ala-ed-Deen? Canst thou answer to that?"

"Pasha, I know not how to grasp the smoke which rises from a chibouque, or

to correct a story which has no foundation. Some enemy has abused your Highness's ear. Whatever others may do by knowledge of the Most Great Name, for of such have I heard, your Highness should know that our religion debars us from these practices. Our means are scanty enough, by Allah! and are all the earnings of our hands. Wealth have we none."

"That is unfortunate," replied Abdallah, "for just now I am sore in want of funds. Money I must have from Christians or from Jews, and that speedily. Come now, old man, be reasonable. I know on the best authority that your people practise magic and can easily provide more than my wants require. I ask for nothing beyond your power to supply. Eighty thousand piastres——"

"Eighty thousand piastres!" gasped Gauriel, as he clutched the head of his crutch.

"Eighty thousand piastres!" exclaimed Makarius and the rest, utterly bewildered at the prospect.

"Now we shall see some sport," whispered Selim to his neighbour on the divan. "Watch the old fox closely!"

There was silence for a few moments in the hall of audience. Mikhel heard the splashing of the fountain as if it had just begun afresh to throw up its silvery column in the air. The cooing of the doves struck on his strained sense of hearing with painful iteration; a whirr of wings, as some half-dozen flew rapidly through the open arches above him, a snoring grunt from Rustan, who moved uneasily in his dreams—how well he recalled afterwards, in the winter nights, as he lay awake in the old familiar room at his uncle's, the sight, the sounds which occupied that terrible interval. "How long did it last?" he sometimes asked himself. It seemed an age to his strained attention before he heard the Bishop speak once more.

"Pasha!" he said at length, "the burden is greater than we can bear. The last harvest was scanty, as is well known; the present is not yet all gathered in, but it will not be much better. Surely your Highness would not wish to do so great an injustice as to exact a sum which would bring misery and starvation on your faithful subjects. We know no magic save that of industry. We are not rich traders like the Jews."

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Abdallah-ul-Hadji; "see how they love one another! Set a Christian to tell you about the Jews, and a Jew if you would know about the Christians. Now, come, old man! I make you a fair offer. I know for certain that you have secret powers. You can, if you will, turn stones into gold, or, by enchantment, make dumb creatures speak with the voice of men."

Gauriel made a gesture of deprecation and horror.

The Pasha continued: "Listen to me, Bishop. The piastres I must have. Ay, by the Prophet of God, whose Name be exalted! I will have them in full. But there is something else that I will have too, and I give thee the choice between them."

The Pasha actually stood up, in his excitement, and pointed to the bear. Rustan, conscious that he was becoming an object of interest, suddenly woke up and sniffed at his boy-keeper who, at a sign from his master, allowed him to approach the Pasha. The presence of his favourite seemed to move Abdallah's gentler feelings, and, before resuming his seat, he gave the bear a handful of sweet-meats, which Rustan quickly disposed of.

"Now," continued the Pasha, "I am told by Yakoob the Jew that you Christians not only possess the knowledge of Al-Kemiyeh, but that you know how to give the speech of men to creatures whom Allah (whose name be praised!) hath deprived of it. The eighty thousand piastres shall be paid, but by Jew or Nazarene I care not. Only this choice I give you. My bear here has more sense than many of my servants. He is faithful, obedient, teachable, but he cannot speak the tongue of the Arabs. Teach him, by the power of your jinns or whatever other influences you possess, to speak and read and I remit the whole of the tax I told you of and will

lay it on the Jews. But let me have no denials. Refuse the task I assign you and you pay the whole impost. Accomplish it and you are free."

Gauriel trembled, as if smitten by ague. Makarius bent his head as though martyrdom were at hand. The rest of the group gazed at the bear and his master alternately. Mikhel stepped forward to his uncle and drew the old man's arm through his own as if to support him.

"Alas!" whispered the Bishop, "we are undone! We cannot accomplish what is impossible. Yakoob has laid on us the whole burden of the tax and caused us to be hated and suspected besides. Yea, by the Blessed Sleepers of Ephesus, we are utterly destroyed."

A sudden thought flashed through the deacon's brain.

"May I have permission to speak?" he asked of the Bishop.

"Speak," gasped his uncle; "speak in the name of all that is holy!"

Mikhel stood forward, still supporting Gauriel with his arm, and salaamed to the Pasha.

"I wait for an answer," said he.

"Your Highness shall have one. We accept the offer."

The Pasha looked puzzled. His guests' faces expressed as much surprise as Orientals think it seemly to evince. Makarius and Nikodemos—for he was of the deputation—exchanged glances of astonishment. The Bishop trembled, and seemed too much overcome to be conscious of the situation.

"Young man," said the Pasha, at length, "do you understand what you promise? You undertake to teach Rustan to read—to read aloud, mark me! Do so, and you are free of the tax. But let there be no deceit, no foul play, or woe betide you all!"

"We bow to your Highness's wish," replied the deacon. "Only may I venture to remind your Excellence that we are undertaking a very difficult task."

"I know it; but what of that?"

"Verily," said the deacon, "the sage hath said truly, 'Haste is from the devil, and it giveth occasion for repentance.' The task is a hard one, and it will require time for its accomplishment. How long will your Highness give us for the instruction?"

The Pasha reflected. "In two days more I leave for Mosul. It will be three months ere I return. I am not unreasonable. The bear shall stay with you for that time. I would not have his education hurried. But beware lest any evil happen to him, or, by the Beard of the Prophet, I will clear you out, root and branch, till men shall search ere they find a single Nazarene in Rowandiz."

The Pasha signed to one of his attendants and gave some orders in his ear. The man salaamed and retired.

"Now," thundered Abdallah, "ye may begone. And may Sheytan and all the jinns of Kaf be with you!"

The Pasha waved his hand as a signal to retire. Gauriel hesitated, and seemed about to speak, but his nephew whispered, "Say no more, uncle." The old man's lips moved, but they uttered no sound. The black-robed Christians prostrated themselves once more before the dais and were then escorted from the presence chamber.

CHAPTER IV.

A STRANGE sight met the Bishop's eyes as the Christians crossed the outer court.

Drawn up in two lines, and apparently awaiting their exit, stood about a score of the Pasha's body-guard. Behind them, turning his pointed nose right and left, came Rustan, conducted by the little black page, and took his place in the procession. Various slaves, carrying different articles for Rustan's comfort, followed without much order, among whom the most conspicuous were two who

carried on poles, sedan fashion, a species of gilded pagoda, which was understood to be Rustan's habitual residence.

When the Bishop and his party emerged from the cloister they were received by a tall black slave, who marshalled them in the rear of the procession, which immediately was put in motion and commenced its march for the Christian quarter. It was not till they had left the palace far behind, and were threading their way through the mingled beehives and dustbins which represent the poorer houses of an Eastern city, that Gauriel broke silence.

"Mikhel, my son," he said, "what hast thou done? Is it not cruel enough that we shall suffer the loss of all that we possess, without the opprobrium and scorn of having made pretence to magical arts, and so confirmed our bitter enemies' worst suspicions?"

"Leave it to me, uncle," said the deacon. "Leave it to me for the present, and hope for the best. I have not lived so long in the free mountain life without learning a few useful lessons from God's creation. City-dwellers may know more of man and his ways; we in the upland villages study the birds and beasts. But let us say no more while we are observed. I will explain myself further to your Holiness when there is a safe opportunity."

The deacon had reason. The strange procession had aroused no little excitement in Rowandiz. Everyone had his own conjecture, his own explanation to account for it. Through all the narrow streets the bystanders ranged themselves against the walls to see it pass. The shopkeepers in the bazaar hastily made room for friends and customers to ensconce themselves cross-legged among the nondescript articles which constituted their stock-in-trade, and gazed with curiosity at the unwonted sight; while a Dervish, counting his beads as he rode by, hastily ejaculated: "I take refuge with Allah from the stoned fiend," as the little shaven donkey which he bestrode turned tail on the approach of the bear, and dashed into the courtyard of an adjoining house.

At length they reached the Christian quarter and the Bishop's residence. Rustan, with all his belongings, was safely deposited in an inner court, and the motley escort set off on its return to the palace.

Meanwhile Gauriel had taken his nephew into his bed-chamber. The old man was overcome with fatigue and with the excitement of the morning, and sank into a cushioned recess in the corner. Mikhel opened a cupboard in the adjoining passage, and came back with a little engraved wine-glass in one hand and a square-shouldered bottle in the other.

"Drink, your Holiness," said the deacon, as he presented to his uncle a glass of the liqueur. "The day has been too much for you."

The Bishop swallowed the draught and seemed revived.

"Speak, Mikhel," he gasped; "what does it all mean? Surely you have lost your senses. When the Pasha returns——"

"Nay, do not anticipate the worst. I did not promise inconsiderately that I would teach Rustan to read. And what if I did? Have you reflected on the alternative?"

"The whole tax to be paid by us," sighed the poor Bishop.

"Ay, and that immediately."

"But what have we gained?" replied his uncle. "The Pasha will be all the more incensed against us by reason of your false promise. We shall be miserably destroyed. Are we not hated and despised sufficiently in Rowandiz without this ignominy? And"—he added with a shudder—"Heaven forefend that thou hast any intention of practising forbidden arts!"

He paused, with a look of horror, for Gauriel was not at all clear in his mind as to the limits of what was possible if a man dared to go deep enough in *diablerie*.

"Fear not, uncle," said the deacon. "Fear not. Your Holiness asks what we have gained by my accepting the Pasha's challenge. I answer that we have, at

all events, gained three months. Is that nothing? Many things may happen in three months. The Pasha may die, the bear may die——"

"Do not delude yourself, Mikhel," replied the Bishop. "The Pasha is as likely to live as any man I know; and if he lives to return, and finds anything has happened to his beast, one death would not suffice for those who had charge of him." The Bishop shuddered again as he spoke.

"Uncle," said Mikhel, falling on his knee before the old man, "I do not depend on the possibilities which I have mentioned. I hope to accomplish the desire of Abdallah. Do not look so horrified at me. For all that I hold most dear; for my own life, and the happiness of others"—the deacon's thoughts suddenly transported him to a certain village in the mountains—"I would not meddle with sorcery. Ask no more now. Leave me free to use the best means I can to achieve my ends. If I should succeed, it is of vital consequence that no one should know the course which I had adopted. Trust me, your Holiness, and give me your blessing."

The Bishop laid his hand on the young deacon's head, and drew it down his forehead and face, as he gave him the blessing which he asked for.

Mikhel rose and, bowing once more to his uncle, left the room.

CHAPTER V.

WINTER had come and almost gone. The snow still lay thick in the mountain passes and, save where the rocks were too precipitous for it to rest, or where the slope inclined to the warmer south, the giant masses of Sheikh Iva stood outlined in dazzling white against an azure sky. But here and there on the sunny pastures the blue gentian and narcissus were bursting into flower, and from the scattered farms and sheepfolds was heard the bleating of sheep and lambs, of kids and goats, as the shepherd lads drove them out in the early morning or brought them home at sunset.

Yes, and with the return of spring the dreaded Pasha was expected back from Mosul.

Great were the anticipations of his arrival. Already messengers had reached Rowandiz to say that he was likely to arrive in about a fortnight. For several weeks past a score of workmen had been busily engaged in cleaning, whitewashing, and painting the palace. The Bimbashi in command of the two or three hundred regulars and as many Bashi-bazouks who composed the ordinary garrison, had worn his men to death with parades and marchings-out, with musketry practice and pipe-clay. The great mosque in the square had been scrupulously swept and cleaned, the top of the minarets above the mueddin's gallery had been whitewashed till they were positively painful to gaze upon. The baths had been repaired, the chief fountain had been re-decorated, and even Abou-Seer's *café* by the Hassaniyeh had undergone a scrubbing.

But what of our friends in the Christian quarter?

There, too, you might have read anxiety not unmingled with fear on many faces familiar to us. It is hardly overstating it to say that all through the winter months Mikhel the deacon had been as much an object of public interest as the Pasha himself. All the city knew what he had undertaken to do. Most believed it to be impossible. But whether, by such magic as the Nuzranis knew, he should succeed in his attempt to teach Rustan to read, or whether he should fail, a great treat was provided for the populace. Indeed, it was hard to say which would be the more satisfactory—the phenomenon of a talking bear, or the ridicule which would be heaped on the Christians if he should not talk, and the pleasure of knowing that they would be well plundered for their temerity.

It was not surprising, therefore, that whenever Mikhel was met out of doors he should be the object of the greatest curiosity. Women peeped at him from behind their veils, or plucked their children indoors as he passed their houses for fear of

the evil eye. Stout Mussulmans spat behind him as he passed and took refuge with Allah. The Jews, when occasionally he encountered one of them, scowled malevolently at the deacon, and once, meeting Yakoob the physician near the synagogue, that worthy asked him derisively how his pupil's education was proceeding.

To all such questions the deacon's answers were guarded and evasive. Even the Bishop knew nothing beyond the fact that Mikhel had undertaken the entire charge of Rustan, that he spent many hours in his company every day, and that the bear, when he walked with the deacon in the cloister, seemed to be on the best terms with him. Yes, there was one other fact the Bishop knew which caused him anxiety disproportioned to its apparent importance. Mikhel had prevailed on his uncle to let him have a huge folio called the *Sunhadus*, or collection of ecclesiastical customs, for the bear to read in. How the bear was to be indoctrinated in ceremonial practices—many of which were not understood by Gauriel himself, and which, indeed, had become practically obsolete—was beyond the poor old Bishop's comprehension. It seemed to him to be adding unnecessary difficulties to the task. Indeed, he had suggested to Mikhel that a child's spelling-book or some simple prayers would be the best for Rustan to begin with. But the deacon shook his head. "Nothing would serve so well," he said, "as the *Sunhadus*." And when the Bishop timidly objected that even he himself could not always understand it—and how should an unbelieving bear?—he could get no satisfactory reply from his nephew. Mikhel had undertaken the whole responsibility, and he must carry out the work in his own way and by his own method.

Gauriel had given his consent to this and he must abide by his decision. Yet many were the sleepless hours he passed in the long winter nights asking himself whether he had done well to entrust so venerable a tome to the unclean paws of a bear, however intelligent; and, worse still, whether as a Christian Bishop he ought, for any consideration, to have taken part in so unnatural, and, therefore, perhaps wicked, an attempt. "If Providence had meant bears to read," was the form in which the difficulty presented itself to him, "would it not have achieved its end without his concurrence? and, if otherwise, was it not flying in the face of Providence and Nature to make the attempt?"

And there was another heart even more anxious than that of the Bishop.

The news of the Pasha's cruel determination and of Mikhel's undertaking had soon reached Sidaka, and not many days elapsed before the deacon took staff in hand and climbed the steep mountain path to Yonan's farm. But the interview which he sought with the old farmer and his daughter was highly unsatisfactory. To neither of them would he explain himself. "Yes, it was true that he had made that rash promise." How it was to be fulfilled was another matter, and Yonan, who was a prudent man and not disposed to risk his daughter's happiness unnecessarily, carefully refrained from committing himself in any way to the wishes of the young couple. In fact, he thought the deacon just a little mad, and was wondering all the time whether that would serve as a plea against the certain vengeance of the Pasha when he should return from Mosul and find that he had been made a fool of.

So Yonan answered enigmatically and coldly, and even Mariam felt dejected and almost jealous of the young man's reticence. She could not understand either why he should have any hope of success in his strange self-imposed task, or why, if he had any such anticipations, he should not communicate his plan to her. He was once so open and straightforward. There was not a thought in his heart but she expected to share it. Why then, ah, why, at so critical a time, should he not tell her all?

It was a heavy trial for the deacon. The first cloud that had ever come between his love and Mariam had risen and was spreading only too rapidly. He did not see how to dispel it. And now for weeks and weeks, perhaps, the passes

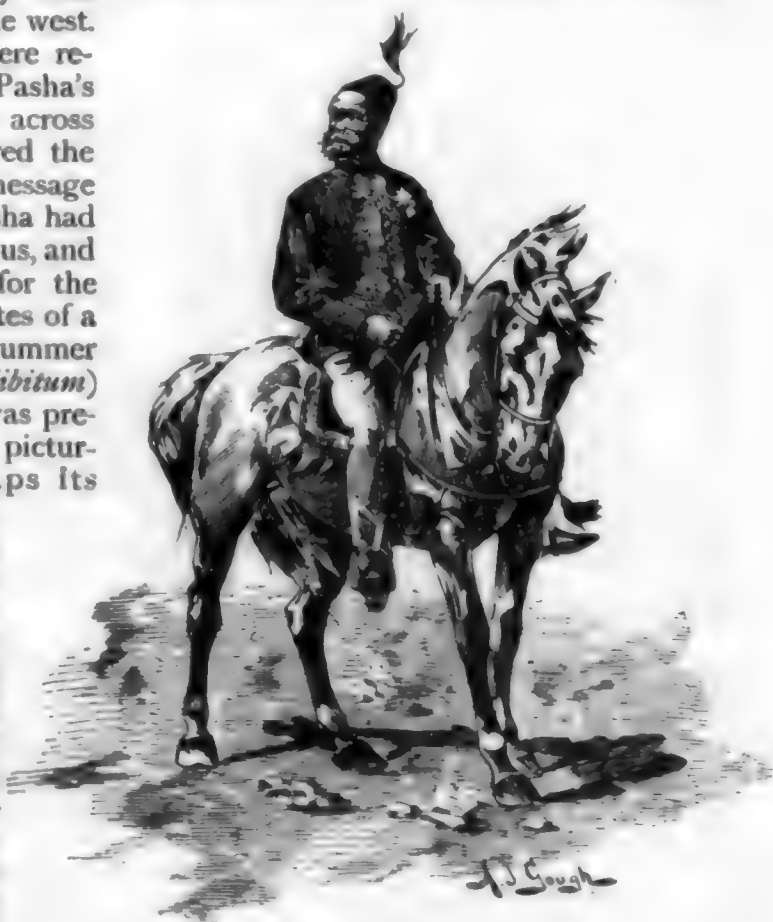
would be blocked with snow. The opportunities of meeting again would be few indeed, even if his education of Rustan should permit of his absence from Rowandiz. His half-suppressed jealousy still smouldered in his breast, and he feared lest Yonan had some reason of his own—some more promising son-in-law—for putting aside all allusions to his long-cherished hope.

It was with a heavy heart that he bade farewell to Mariam and her father and returned to Rowandiz. He saw her no more till the end of the winter, when the Pasha's return from Mosul was to precipitate their fate.

CHAPTER VI.

THE great day was approaching, the town was on the tiptoe of expectation, and so soon as Abdallah should return, the Bishop knew well that the crisis could not be long deferred. The Pasha's insane affection for the beast and his evident belief in the possibility of what Yakooob the Jew had suggested, alike made it certain that he would require without delay the fulfilment of the deacon's engagement. Twice already, during the winter, a Bashi-bazouk, with long lance and clanging sabre, and a little armoury of pistols and daggers stuck about him, had ridden into the Bishop's courtyard with instructions from Mosul. A part of these was that he was to see and report on the condition of Rustan. Abdallah might be superstitious and ignorant of the capacity of bears but he was not a fool to be lightly hoodwinked, and he wished the Christians to understand that there must be no foul play in the case of his favourite. Fortunately for the Bishop, Rustan was reported as well in health and apparently contented with his quarters.

At length, one fine morning in the beginning of March, two men on horseback were seen ascending the dusty road which led to Rowandiz from the west. As they came nearer, they were recognised as belonging to the Pasha's body-guard. Riding straight across the parade-ground, they entered the barrack-yard and gave their message to the commandant. The Pasha had reached Balak the night previous, and was even then on his way for the city. Soon the discordant notes of a Turkish band (in which the drummer always seems to play *ad libitum*) announced that the garrison was prepared to march. It made a picturesque show, though perhaps its military efficiency left somewhat to be desired. First came the Bashi-bazouks with long bamboo spears and gaily caparisoned (if weedy) horses, the riders sitting perched high on their wooden saddles and making their steeds curvet by a plentiful application of the short, sharp-heeled, shovel-stirrup. Then followed the Bimbashi in blue tunic covered with silver lace and wearing the red fez with tassel. He was



"MOUNTED ON A WHITE ARAB"

mounted on a white Arab, the only horse which showed much sign of blood, and looked very brave, with his numerous decorations and the star of the Medjidie. Last came a few hundred of the ordinary Nizam foot-soldiers in white tunics of coarse linen and wearing the fez. So they wound down the hill, the band playing a lively tune, and the dust rising in clouds above their heads, marking their whereabouts even when the windings of the road hid from time to time the bright points of light from the spear-heads and accoutrements, and the steadier flash of the bayonets.

Half-an-hour before noon, as the mueddin climbed the minaret staircase at the Hassaneen to chant the *Selâm*, he saw in the distance a great cloud of dust on the Balak road, and when he had duly paid his homage to the Prophet and invoked the usual blessings on him and his companions, the old man leaned his arms on the gallery rail and looked earnestly to the west. The long-expected procession was on its way and would soon reach the foot of the hill. It was time for all who wished to be considered good subjects of the Padishah, and well-disposed towards his representative, to turn out for the ceremonial reception. And soon the old threshing-floor outside the gate, and the steep banks of the road on either side, were crowded by the notables of Rowandiz. Government officials in blue frock-coats and patent-leather boots, turbaned Aghas, dervishes in conical brown felt hats and pleated robes, Jews in yellow *abbas*, Christians in dark blue with black turbans—Gauriel and his deacon prominent among them—besides these, crowds of the common people, Christian women in red with white veils; Mussulman women in loose blue robes and white head-dresses; such was the motley assemblage which awaited the Pasha's approach.

And now the sound of drums and trumpets made itself heard, and the garrison, preceded by its band, came out at the top of the ascent where an old Roman arch still spans the road. The Bimbashi rode at the head, his drawn sword in his hand. The rest of the troops came in reverse order. When the last of the Bashi-bazouks had passed there appeared some of the Pasha's syces and eunuchs marching in front and at the sides of a kind of hearse covered with a thick white net. This contained the ladies of the harem, and necessitated the etiquette, so puzzling to a stranger, of all the men on both sides of the road turning their backs to it and professing to be examining the beauties (safer for them to behold) of the landscape. Meanwhile the syces laid their sticks with much zest on the shoulders and heads of the common herd and idle boys to quicken this operation and enforce respect. The harem carriage was followed by several members of the Pasha's household, including some dwarfs, buffoons, and two fine greyhounds in a leash, led by a page. The escort followed which had accompanied him from Mosul, and which, like the garrison, consisted of both cavalry and infantry. Abdallah himself was in an open carriage; two executioners in red tunics followed on horseback. Fourgons for luggage, led horses, and various servants of the household formed the tail of the procession, which was finally closed by a rear-guard of half-a-dozen Bashi-bazouks.

So, amid the respectful salaams of his subjects, Abdallah-ul-Hadji returned to Rowandiz, which testified its respect, or fear, for its governor after sunset by a discharge of fireworks in the great square, and a picturesque display of tiny oil lamps, glittering like fireflies, in the dark and tortuous streets of the city, and sparkling like stars round the minaret balconies of the Hassaneen mosque.

CHAPTER VII.

THE semantron, that primæval sounding-board which calls Eastern Christians to prayer, broke in on Mikhel's slumbers long before the dawn, and dissipated an uneasy dream in which Mariam, the Pasha, and Rustan all had their parts, though he could not for the life of him recall the details. He sprang up from his mattress on the floor of his cell, went down to the fountain in the inner court to perform his

ablutions, and returned to his room for his outer garment and belt. He then joined the crowd of dark-robed Christians in the dimly lighted church. The service over, Gauriel beckoned to the deacon.

"Come to me in my private room when you have had some food."

It was a roughly furnished little chamber opening out of the *lee-wán* where Mikhel found the Bishop. By his side was a small table with one or two cakes of bread and some dried fruit. A cup of tea with a slice of lemon stood by, but his breakfast seemed hardly to have been touched. Mikhel made his reverence to the cross in the corner of the room and approached his uncle with a respectful salutation. The Bishop signed a blessing and bade him sit down. The deacon obeyed, and sat on the upturned soles of his feet by his uncle's chair.

"Mikhel," said the old man, "the time has come!"

"I know it, your Holiness!"

"The Pasha will not long delay to require the proof of your skill."

"God is great," replied the deacon, sententiously.

"Mikhel, I have reirained from questioning you all this long time. But I can forbear no longer. Before the fatal day arrives—it may be to-morrow, who knows?—I beg you to give me some knowledge of what you expect to do. The storm which is foreseen is easier to bear with. My life has been so miserable with cruel anticipations of I know not what, that death itself would be better than this uncertainty. You said the success of your device—God forbid that it should touch on sorcery!—depended on absolute secrecy. But is it not possible now to give me some assurance that you have not entirely failed in your purpose? In the daily prayer which we offer for our oppressors I have begged the good Lord to turn the heart of the Pasha. I hardly dared to ask a blessing on the task which thou wast engaged upon."

The Bishop's voice trembled with emotion. He laid his hand on the deacon's head.

"Uncle," said the young man, "you know I would give my life for you. I have undertaken a great task, I am well aware. Were it not an absolute necessity my plan should be known to no one, I would not have concealed it from your Holiness. But the crisis is so close at hand that I might venture to show your Holiness some evidence, at all events, that I have not altogether failed. Will it please you to come and see my pupil?"

Gauriel rose instantly and, holding his crutch with one hand while he rested the other on the deacon's shoulder, descended the staircase into the inner court. Here Mikhel left the Bishop for a few moments and soon reappeared with a huge tome on his shoulder. The Bishop recognised the Sunhadus. His first thought was one of satisfaction that so valued a treasure had not yet been devoured by the terrible Rustan.

Unlocking the door of an old out-building, the use of which Mikhel had bespoken for his charge, the deacon beckoned Gauriel to follow. The light was dim, but the Bishop made out at once the pagoda-like structure which had been brought with the bear on the day when Mikhel had undertaken his education. The old man trembled as he heard the rattling of a chain and saw Rustan emerge from his residence. It was not so much fear of the animal, which was well known to be extremely docile and good-tempered, as dread lest he should be the witness of some unholy incantation or unnatural prodigy, which caused him to hesitate. The deacon unbarred a wooden shutter and threw a brighter light into the room.

"Now," he said to the Bishop, "all I can show your Holiness at present is that Rustan and I are very good friends, and that he loves both his teacher and his books."

In fact, the bear manifested the greatest delight at the sight of Mikhel, and as soon as the young man came within reach stood on his hind-legs and uttered the most extraordinary little growls in a sing-song fashion, placing his huge paws on

Mikhel's shoulders and lolling out his tongue as the deacon turned his ear towards his muzzle.

"There, there," said the latter, "don't be too eager for your lesson, Rustan! What? You want to begin, do you?"

The bear roared out something, but what it was the Bishop could not make out.

Gauriel stood amazed. But he could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw Rustan's increasing excitement at the sight of the huge folio which the deacon had deposited on a wooden stand near him. The bear was straining at his chain with eagerness and delight to get nearer to his lesson-book.

"Is that enough for your Holiness?" asked the deacon. "I cannot now go through the whole of the lesson, but you will see that my efforts have not been entirely thrown away."

"Wonderful, wonderful!" exclaimed the Bishop. "And such a book as the Sunhadus, too! Why, Mikhel, I can hardly read it myself, so old-fashioned are the characters, much less comprehend it! And does he really understand the meaning of it and the ritual directions?" asked the simple old man.

"I may not say more at present," replied the deacon. "All that I promised your Holiness I have done, for I would not willingly prolong your anxiety. We must now await the Pasha's orders."

He closed the shutter, and, taking the precious Sunhadus on his head, preceded his uncle to the house. The bear greeted their departure with a prolonged whine breaking into a growl of disappointment.

"Wonderful, wonderful!" again ejaculated the Bishop. "To think that he should not only have learnt to read, but to read so hard a book as the Sunhadus! And that he should like it so much, too!"

That very day there arrived a missive from the Pasha in the following terms:

"To his Holiness, Gauriel the Bishop.

"In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, and of Mohammed the servant of Allah, and blessings be upon the Prophet and all his companions! Let the Bishop and Christians attend after the Mosque prayers on the excellent Friday in the Great Square, and let the bear be brought that the Pasha may hear him read.
ABDALLAH-UL-HADJI."

Friday! and it was now Wednesday afternoon!

CHAPTER VIII.

VERY early the next morning Mikhel was on his way to Sidaka. Yonan had gone to see his beasts led out to pasture and he found Mariam alone.

After the first greetings she told him that the news had already reached them of the Pasha's return and asked eagerly if he had yet made any demand for the reading bear.

"To-morrow," replied the deacon, "we have to produce him in public;" and he told her of Abdallah's letter of the day previous. "That is why you see me this morning. I come to ask you to be present and witness the performance."

He spoke with more confidence than she had expected and his eyes brightened with anticipation.

Mariam was puzzled.

Surely it must be a thing impossible for a bear to be taught his letters! Even Mikhel—her old confidence led her to believe that if any man *could* do it it was he—even Mikhel could not accomplish such a task. And, if not, certain ruin awaited him, and with him, how many others! The Pasha's wrath would be terrible. How could the young man view the prospect with equanimity?

"Mariam!" he said, replying to her thoughts, "you do not believe I can

accomplish what I have undertaken. Come and see whether I succeed or not. Remember, what I have to do is to satisfy the Pasha. That is all. I think I *shall* satisfy him. Of course, I may fail, and if I fail I am lost. But whether I win or lose, let it be in your presence. Let me have the joy of your sweet eyes looking on my success, or the sad satisfaction that they weep for my death. For failure will be death, I cannot doubt."

"Oh, Mikhel!" exclaimed the girl, all her old reserve broken down by this terrible prospect; "Oh, Mikhel, my own love, do not say so! Why should you have ever undertaken such a task? Why should you persevere in it now?" And she threw herself on her father's cushioned seat in the deep window recess and buried her face in the pillows. She struggled hard to control her feelings, for the mountaineer is made of sterner stuff than to betray such weakness, but all in vain.

Mikhel bent over her, his teeth set, his brow contracted by a spasm of deepest sympathy and love.

"Light of my eyes!" he said, "surely I am sufficiently rewarded. Would to Heaven that we could both be snatched away to a better life than this! For myself I care not what may befall me, save for leaving thee behind. Come what will now, I have been blest by this avowal."

He knelt on one knee and tried to raise her head upon his arm.

His tenderness only caused a fresh outburst of convulsive sobs. The young man drew himself together and tried to steady his voice.

"Mariam, my love!" he said, "do not give way to these forebodings. I told you, I tell you again, that I have good hopes of success. Nay," he added, "listen to me! You shall know what no one else does—not even my uncle Gauriel—what reason I have for confidence."

She raised herself on the settle and tried to smile, but it was a sad failure. Her bright cheeks were wet and the long eyelashes glistening with tears.

Mikhel seated himself by her side and stole one arm round the girl's waist. She did not resent it. Nay, a slender sunburnt hand met Mikhel's as it rested on the embossed fastening of her girdle and seemed to derive strength from her lover's grasp.

So they sat for some moments, a pretty picture if there had been an artist there to paint it.

The dark *chiaroscuro* of the dimly lighted room, with



"THREW HERSELF ON HER FATHER'S CUSHIONED SEAT"

its low, discoloured rafters overhead; the rough table of old walnut-wood, on which stood the remains of Yonan's early breakfast; a glowing ember or two on the hearth, over which in a shallow vessel stood a dish of milk slowly simmering; hard by, in a corner near the window, Mariam's spinning-wheel and a long-barrelled gun of her father's—such was the interior of the house. Outside the sunlight shone with dazzling intensity, throwing the black shadow of the penthouse all around, under which hung ladders and some strings of gourds and onions, while, through the open door, the eye fell on olive trees and pink peach blossom crowning the ascent and clustered round the farm. Nor did the view end there. Between the gnarled old olive trunks the glance struck on the green and narrow valley, the torrent glistening here and there a mile or two away, while the steep mountain slope opposite was bright with the earliest foliage of beech and oak, contrasting with the dark and gloomy pines that clustered on the rocky summits, and stood out in black outline against the snowy peaks of a more distant range.

All was so still that the sharp bleating of a kid on the pastures and the aimless buzzing of a huge bee which had lost his way into the house and knocked his foolish head at intervals against the tiny window-panes, became almost oppressive.

Neither of the young people seemed to wish to break the silence. Each was for the time supremely happy in the consciousness of a trusting and requited affection.

At length Mariam spoke.

"Tell me now, Mikhel, what hope you have of success. Has the bear really learnt to say anything? And how did you teach him?"

"You shall hear how he reads, for yourself, to-morrow," he said with a smile. "To-day I will tell you—but, remember, you alone—how I have taught him."

"I will keep it secret. You may trust me," replied the girl.

"Well," said the deacon, "you must know that bears are very fond of sweet things."

"Yes?" she answered inquiringly; "but what has that to do with reading?"

"Oh, a great deal. And Rustan is particularly attached to dates."

"Do go on, Mikhel," she said impatiently. "I cannot bear this suspense."

"Now," said the deacon, "you must know that my uncle the Bishop has a big book—oh, such a big book!—which he values immensely, though it is so old and so hard to understand, for a good deal of it is about rites and ceremonies which are quite obsolete, that even he himself could hardly tell you what it means. I borrowed this book from him—it is called the *Sunhadus*—that I might teach the bear to read from it."

Mariam looked hopelessly puzzled.

"But what has all this to do with dates or sweetmeats?" she asked.

"A great deal, in Rustan's opinion. For when I had won the bear's confidence—you remember. I was always fond of animals, and they soon find out who loves them—I began by fastening a row of dates on one of the parchment pages of the *Sunhadus*."

"Well?"

"And another row beneath them, and another and another, down to the bottom of the page. Then I began Rustan's education. I led him up to where I had deposited the venerable *Sunhadus* and, opening the cover, I showed him the dates on the first page. He soon set to work to devour them," added the deacon, "and did not wait to say 'Bismillah!'"

"Ah!" said the girl; "but still I do not understand."

"Be patient," replied Mikhel, "and you shall hear more. When Rustan set about eating the dates promiscuously, I had to teach him good manners. So with a little rod which I held in my hand I rapped him on the muzzle and made him begin at the end of the line, just as if the dates were something written or printed.

It did not take him long to teach him this trick. Before a month was over he had learnt how to eat his dates like a gentleman and a Christian. Rustan is very sensible and he carries his nose along the line as if he moved by clockwork."

"But that is not teaching him to read," objected Mariam.

"Really," said the deacon with a smile, "it is harder to teach you than the bear. Will you not listen quietly?"

She pressed the young man's arm by way of response, and he continued:—

"When Rustan had learnt to eat one page of dates I let him understand that there were more to reward his researches over-leaf. This was a delightful discovery for him. And you would have laughed, Mariam, as I did, to see how quickly he gathered that by raising the next page with his snout, he would enjoy a fresh treat. So now, when he has eaten a page of dates with the gravity of a Dervish, he turns over another, and—*presto!* they go the same way as the first."

"That is all very well if the Pasha had merely told you to teach him to eat dates."

"Ah, you pretty unbeliever!" said her lover. "I have explained quite enough. Tell me, if the Pasha is satisfied with the bear's progress, will not that content you? Or do you wish to see Yakoub the Jew's design accomplished and all our fortunes confiscated?"

"Mikhel," said the girl, "you know I trust you implicitly. I do not understand you. I do not see how the Pasha can be satisfied with such a result. But I will ask no more. May God prosper you! for oh, it touches our happiness, nay, our lives!"

"Then you will not fail to be at Rowandiz to-morrow?"

"I will persuade my father to bring me."

They were standing by the open door hand in hand. The sweet breath of the morning exhilarated them. The world was very beautiful. Life is still worth living when you have not yet touched thirty, and there is some one else willing to share it with you.

But Mariam felt as if her heart would break. In spite of the deacon's assurances she knew that the shadow of a great danger hung over them both.

"Mikhel," she said at length, "I fear you are disguising from me the danger you are about to run. Over and over again, even while you were speaking so confidently, the words were ringing in my ears, 'To-morrow will I go in unto the king, and if I perish, I perish!'"

"Yet she did not perish, Mariam. And I have good hope to succeed. And if I do," he added, "and if my uncle approves, will you not fulfil your promise and satisfy the hope of my life? Why should it be delayed longer?"

He seized both her hands in his and gazed earnestly into her face.

The young girl did not turn away.



"DREW HER NEARER, AND PRINTED A KISS
UPON HER LIPS"

"Mikhel," she answered gravely, "if my father consents it shall be as you wish. May God keep you from all danger!"

Mikhel drew her nearer and printed a kiss upon her lips. Then he tore himself away.

CHAPTER IX.

THE day on which Mikhel visited the farm at Sidaka was a busy one at Rowandiz. From early morning till late at night the Hassaneen Square had resounded with saws and hammers. Mules and camels in long file had brought sawn timber and planks and laid them down before the great mosque; while all the carpenters of the city, and many of the Pasha's household, were actively engaged in preparing for the great ceremonial of the next day. Crowds of interested bystanders watched the proceedings and passed their comments upon them.

"By Allah!" ejaculated our old friend Abou-Seer, as he sat on the stone seat outside his shop, "and if the Prophet (on whom be the blessing of God!) had written it in the Koran, yea, with a pen from the wing of Gabriel, I had found it hard to believe."

"To believe what?" asked a young man in blue and white caftan, with girdle of Damascus silk round his waist. The speaker sat with a long pipe in his hand, the earthenware bowl of which rested on a little brass tray in front of him. "Explain thyself, O Abou-Seer, for verily thy words are darker than Eblis."

"Jest not, by thy head!" replied the coffee-house keeper. "Dost thou not see the scaffolding which workmen are erecting in the square? Dost thou not hear the noise of hammers like the blows of Hamza, Ali, and Obeida (on whom be peace!) when they smote the lying Koreish at Bedr? What thinkest thou will be the upshot of all this?"

"Verily," said the young man, "I care not. So thou wilt keep me a good place on thy *mastabah*, Abou-Seer, I know I shall have pleasure from the sight which Abdallah-ul-Hadji is preparing for us."

"Ay," remarked another of Abou-Seer's guests, an old grey-bearded man with a Kashmeer shawl wound round his tarboosh; "and when the cursed Nuzranis have failed with their bear-teaching, and the Pasha makes a sign to the soldiers, how many of them dost think will reach their homes in safety? By Allah! but we shall see a fine sport ere they regain the Christian quarter! Didst thou ever see a gazelle hunt with cheetahs? Such have I witnessed once in Persia. Nor shall I ever forget how brave the deer looked till the cheetahs were slipped! Ah, by the beard of the Prophet (on whom be blessing and peace!) that was a grand sight!"

The old man's eyes twinkled underneath the bushy penthouse of his eyebrows, and he sipped his coffee with infinite zest.

"Truly, I admire thy comparison, Mustapha," replied the young fellow with the pipe, as he lazily puffed out a wreath of fragrant smoke. "Thine imagination does thee credit, and the face of Saadi is become black! When I think of our Bashi-bazouks as cheetahs, and that heavy old Bishop and his crew of black-robed villains flying from the rabble in the character of gazelles, I confess it tickles my fancy exceedingly!" And his laugh was echoed by all the company whom the pleasure of watching the Pasha's preparations in the Square had made more numerous than usual.

"Well," said the old man, casting a sinister look at the speaker and evidently nettled by his comments, "if grey hairs bring not always wisdom, yet 'youth and folly,' as saith the sage, 'are seldom separate.' By Allah! those who live longest see most, and if these Christians have deceived the Pasha, Abdallah would do well to squeeze his eighty thousand piastres out of them with all speed, or a few burnt timbers may be all he finds of their quarter. There are ugly rumours abroad as to the end of this performance."

"Surely," said a voice behind, "it all depends on whether the bear reads or not."

It was an old man in a green caftan who spoke. He was sitting a little apart, and had not before joined in the conversation, but quietly sipped a cup of sherbet from time to time, replacing it carefully on a round tray which stood on a stool by his side.

"Listen to the shereef," exclaimed Abou-Seer, turning to the old man with much respect. "When Muaneddeen speaks, the wise lay their hand upon their mouth."

"Tell us then, O Master," said Mustapha. "Perhaps these young men may hearken to thy wisdom, and their faces may become whiter. Surely thou dost not expect the Nuzranis to succeed?"

"Allah is great!" replied the shereef, solemnly. "Extolled be His perfections! And blessings be on the name of the Prophet and his companions!"

He paused and sipped his sherbet in a provokingly oracular manner.

The company waited, and, though their curiosity was roused, each tried hard to put on an appearance of indifference.

"O Muslim, whose guide is the Koran, rejoice in it, for safety hath come to thee!" again ejaculated the old gentleman in green.

Silence a second time ensued, only broken by an occasional puff from the smokers and the sound of the hammering from the street.

"Extolled be the perfections of Allah, who even to the infidels hath granted knowledge!"

"Ameen!" exclaimed the smokers in chorus.

"Verily," said Muaneddeen, "though I fear not what Satan hath suggested, yet I would not deny that a bear may be taught to read by those whose magic enables them to do even more marvellous things."

He paused again for some moments and then resumed:—

"I was travelling with a caravan to Kermanshah at the end of Ramadan in last year, and with us was a young man from Yezid who belonged to the true faith. His name was Ibrahim Bukridi. This young man had been taken as a child across the black water to the country of the Feringhis, where he saw many wonderful things. The idolaters, he told us, live in a city called Londeen, where they never see the sun, and would pass their time in the dark were it not for innumerable lamps and lanterns which they hang in the air. These lamps, Bukridi assured us, are kept alight by jinns, for they burn no oil in them, neither candles. But the strangest thing of all is the way in which they travel. For, instead of horses to draw their carriages, or slaves to bear them on a journey, they have long rows of boxes on wheels, but without horses. When the time is come for the journey, the idolaters get into the boxes, and a huge jinn, breathing out fire and smoke, flies away with them, even as the carpet of Suleyman the son of Daoud used to carry him from place to place. And many other like things do they by their accursed magic and the power of their jinns. These were the words of Bukridi. Now it seems to me that if the Feringhis beyond the sea can accomplish such wonderful deeds as these, it may be that our Christians here have learnt, by the power of the most holy Name, how to do what surely is much easier—to make a bear talk? Why should not a bear talk?"

He stopped to refresh himself after so long a speech, and again sipped his sherbet.

"Wonderful is the will of Allah!" said the coffee-shop keeper, solemnly. "But if Allah had meant bears to talk, would he not have made them so?"

"Therein thou speakest wisely," replied the shereef. "I say not that what these accursed do is according to what Allah wills. I but tell you what Ibrahim assured me of. Yea, and he said that the idolaters had such power over evil spirits that they could converse with one another through the air hundreds of leagues

away, and that if one wanted to accomplish this he went to a cave wherein the sorcerer lived and gave him money. The sorcerer then spoke to the evil spirit, and in a moment he had flown to the other Feringhi and told him the message. Now, if they can use jinns to talk with one another, is it not conceivable that their chief Imam at Rowandiz may have learned what is assuredly much easier—to give the Pasha's bear the power of speech, though Allah endowed not bears with it at the first?"

The argument was unanswerable, and the company were evidently shaken in their opinion of what might happen on the morrow.

Before they separated for their own homes they went down into the Square to examine the preparations. The scaffolding was not yet completed, but its general arrangement was obvious. In front of the raised marble platform on the north side of the mosque, and rising a few feet higher, a dais had been erected for the Pasha and his more immediate attendants. To the right and left of this, at right angles to it, was a series of benches rising in stages one above another, and continued up to the wall of the buildings, which formed the east and west sides of the great Hassaneen Square. The front was

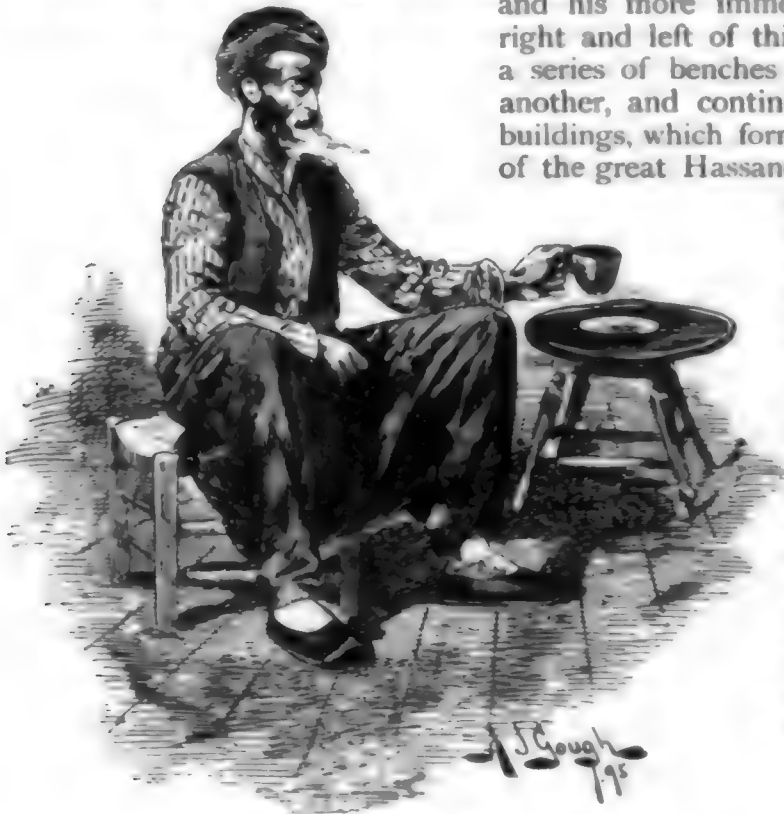
left opened for less distinguished spectators, whom a strong barrier was to separate from the chief actors in the scene.

"Verily," said Mustapha, "the Pasha has done wisely to give the people this sight. The Christians have accepted his challenge. We shall see whether their jinns are powerful enough to help them. But, for my part, I trust to witness their discomfiture. I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the accursed!"

CHAPTER X.

THE great day dawned at last, and Rowandiz was to

see the solution of the puzzle which had agitated its inhabitants of every nationality and religion for the last three months. Those who are familiar with the ordinary quiet routine of life in an eastern city, and the supreme satisfaction which everybody feels in doing each day exactly what he did on the day before, can hardly realise the wild excitement which seizes on a whole population under the influence of religious enthusiasm at some great crisis of expectation. The commemoration of Hassan and Hossein on the 10th of Mohurrum in some fanatical Indian city, or Cairo, as we have known it, with every inch of ground in the thoroughfares packed with an excited mob, can, however, convey some idea of the state of Rowandiz on this eventful day. From the time when the Mueddin chanted the *Ebed* from his gallery an hour before daybreak crowds had begun to collect in the great square, and before midday there was not a standing place to be found. The windows and tops of the houses were alive with turban and fez, and although many of the buildings which commanded a view of the platform had their lattices carefully closed, this was well understood to be



"AND AGAIN SIPPED HIS SHERBET"

because the inmates of the harems were clustered behind them to witness, with no little trepidation, the Christian magic. The time fixed for the exhibition was to be immediately after the noon prayers, for the day was Friday, and the Pasha had already entered the mosque by a private corridor communicating with it from the palace.

The excitement inside the mosque, though more subdued, was almost as great as that in the Hassaneen Square, and when the Khateeb, standing between the two flags at the top of the pulpit stairs and holding the sword in his hand, had finished his customary address a buzz of assent and pious ejaculation sounded through the dome. The prayers finished, the body-guard of the Pasha cleared the way for him through the crowd of worshippers to the great portal opening on the Square, and at the same time the regimental band outside struck up a lively air which, however, was almost drowned in the hoarse shouts of the multitude. In front of Abdallah came some of his eunuchs and chief officers of the household, and he was closely followed by the mollahs, muftis, presidents of the different councils, the chief *defterdar* or revenue collector, as well as the officials of the mosque and some of his personal friends.

Simultaneously with the appearance of the Pasha there was a commotion in the rear of the vast crowd assembled, and the heads of many at the windows and housetops began to be turned in the other direction as if by a counter-attraction.

"The Bishop! the Bishop! the Nuzranis!" was the cry. "By Allah! they come! The bear, the bear!"

Yes, they were coming. Preceded by a dozen irregular cavalry who made way for them with difficulty through the dense crowd, striking freely with their sheathed swords, and followed by a company of Nizam infantry, the principal Christians were approaching. As they came nearer Abou-Seer and his friends, who had found the roof of the coffee-shop a better place from which to witness the proceedings, could identify the chief persons of the drama which was to ensue. And from the window of an adjoining house which belonged to a friendly Moslem, two eager faces looked out—those of Yonan and Mariam. The old man appeared anxious and thoughtful more than his wont, but Mariam, though her heart stopped for a moment as she discerned her lover and Rustan in the throng and then beat audibly underneath the bright bodice which she wore, kept up her spirits, and was even conscious of a sense of exultation at the thought of the prominence of the young deacon in the critical scene which was to follow, not unmixed with pride at the knowledge which she alone possessed of the plan by which he expected to succeed.

And now the escort halted before the heavy barrier which gave entrance to the platform, and facing about, with their horses' heads inwards so as to keep back the crowd with their haunches, made way for the Christian party to ascend the steps.

Their doing so was the signal for a long and reiterated cry of "Allah!" from the densely-packed multitude, and when the bear was seen nimbly climbing the platform and following closely on the deacon's heels, a loud yell of delight and expectation burst from their lips, some little Moslem boys on the top of one of the houses near clapping their hands for joy.

The band ceased playing as Gauriel and his followers reached the dais, and a deep hush fell upon the multitude.

"Let the Bishop approach," said the Pasha.

Gauriel advanced and made a profound salaam to Abdallah, in which he was imitated by his followers. Mikhel stood behind the rest holding the bear's chain in his hand. Rustan seemed uneasy and swayed nervously from side to side, looking anxiously at the deacon and again at Makarius, who carried on his head a huge book, steadying it with his hands. Mariam recognised the Sunhadus.

The Pasha glanced at his favourite as if he expected the bear to show some sign of recognition, but Rustan was too much occupied with his own thoughts, and

perhaps too deeply impressed with the importance of the task he was engaged upon, to take notice of his own master.

"Bishop!" said the Pasha, "the time has come to fulfil your promise. Are you prepared to do so?"

"Your Highness, we are prepared."

"You know the conditions?"

"We know them."

Gauriel tried to speak confidently, but his voice quavered and his knees smote against one another.

"They will fail, they will fail!" whispered a white-bearded man in a Jewish turban to his next neighbour. "The old hypocrite knows that he lies. See how he shakes!"

"Ah!" replied the other, "to think the cursed ones should dare to reproach us with exacting usury and yet themselves deal with familiar spirits! But they shall be destroyed, Yakoub. And when their tricks are exposed, you shall see them smitten hip and thigh even to utter destruction. But hush! they are making preparation for the trial."

It was so.

At a sign from Mikhel one of the Christians approached carrying a wooden lectern about three feet high with a broad projecting ledge for a book. On this Makarius, with great care, deposited the precious Sunhadus right in front of the Pasha's seat.

"Is it your Highness's will that we shall proceed?" asked Mikhel, who stood by the lectern with a wand in his hand. He had given the bear's chain to Makarius to hold, who was stationed a few paces in the rear.

A thrill of expectation ran through the multitude and all eyes were turned on Rustan, who began to manifest the most lively desire to begin his lesson and get near to his reading-book. It was as much as Makarius could do to prevent being dragged across the stage.

"By Allah!" exclaimed the bystanders, "see how eager he is to begin!"

The Jews, who occupied several of the rising seats, looked somewhat less confident, while the Christians glanced from the bear to the Bishop with wonder and admiration of their chief's hitherto unsuspected powers.

"Let him approach," said the Pasha.

Makarius stepped towards the wooden stand on which lay the Sunhadus. Instantly the bear rose upon his hind legs and, placing a huge paw on each side of the book, fixed his bright yellow eyes on the deacon.

"Rustan!" cried Mikhel, "begin your lesson!" At the same time he tapped the old leather cover of the Sunhadus with the rod in his hand.

To the utter amazement of all, from the Pasha to the little Moslem boys on the roof, Rustan made some inarticulate response which sounded like assent, and instantly turning over the cover with nose and paw, began to read line after line with astonishing rapidity, roaring out his heartfelt disgust at the absence of his dates. The spectators held their breath with terror or surprise. The Pasha swore by his head and the tomb of El-Abbas that such a phenomenon was unheard of, while many pious Moslems committed themselves audibly to the protection of Allah and took refuge with him from the stoned fiend.

Meanwhile Rustan, running his nose rapidly from right to left, mumbled out in a hoarse, thick, grunting voice line after line as the deacon pointed to them in turn, and, when he got to the bottom of the heavy parchment folio, turned over the page with apparently fresh zest and began on the next. Shouts of applause rang from all sides. The little boys on the roof became wild with excitement, and behind a lattice which overlooked the scene a young girl flung herself into her father's arms and ejaculated the deacon's name. The second page, and then the third, of the Sunhadus had been read through by the bear with still greater interest on his part

and increasing excitement of the multitude when the Pasha raised his hand to command silence and suspend the performance.

"Is your Highness satisfied?" asked the deacon, as he stood, rod in hand, before the Pasha, while the Bishop, overcome with emotion, leant upon one of his friends and buried his face upon his shoulder.

"Not entirely," replied Abdallah. "I grant you have taught him to read, but methinks his pronunciation is defective. For my part, I could scarcely make out a word. Surely that was neither Arabic nor Turkish which we heard."

"Your Highness, the book from which he read to-day is in old Syriac," the Bishop hastened to explain. "We call it the *Sunhadus*."

"And what may that be?" asked Abdallah.

"Verily it contains the rules for fasts and festivals and divers canons for the government of our people. And the customs are not now all of them observed, and many of the ordinances are hard to understand. Even I myself, often as I study the book, fail sometimes to see the exact meaning."

"Ha!" said the Pasha, "that explains it; for, though Rustan read well, he did not seem quite clear as to the meaning, and his voice was thick and inarticulate."

"Your Highness did not prescribe to us the language of the book. And," the old man added with perfect simplicity, "what we have just seen appears to me a wonder beyond all conception. Who ever heard of a bear reading at all?"

"Bishop," replied Abdallah, "I do not blame you. I blame myself for not having him taught the language of the Prophet, on whom be blessing and peace. But my word was pledged to you, and I go not back from it."

"Then your Highness accepts our humble efforts in lieu of the tax?"

"Inshallah! It was so decreed," replied Abdallah.

A cry of joy rose from the black-turbaned Christians in the crowd, which was taken up and echoed through the Square. Even the Mussulmans could not refrain from an expression of sympathy after so astounding an evidence of supernatural power on the part of the Nuzranis.

Meanwhile one of the heroes of the day was being rewarded by the Pasha's order with a basketful of figs and dates, which Rustan was munching to his heart's content. The other, our friend Mikhel, was the centre of a little crowd all eager to offer their congratulations.

The Bishop with his immediate attendants approached Abdallah to ask permission to retire.

"I may not go back upon my word," said the Pasha, regretfully; "but I could have wished him to have read more distinctly. And I would that his education might be carried further."

"May it please your Highness," said Awishalum the sacristan, who was one of the little group behind his chair, "it seems to me that our deacon made a mistake."

"How so?" asked the great man.

"He has taught him," replied the sacristan, "from a book without vowel points. What wonder that his pronunciation was imperfect!"

The Pasha was interested. Doubtless that was the true explanation. But how to remedy it? He could hardly impose fresh terms on the Christians.

"Hast thou ought to suggest whereby that defect may be supplied?" he asked sternly.

"If it please you to hear," said Awishalum, "I could show how the good work may be completed."

"Speak, then, but beware of trifling."

"My lord!" said Awishalum, "there are those not far off who could teach Rustan not only the Syriac, as we have done, but Arabic with the vowel points complete."

"And who may those be?"

"The Jews, your Highness!" replied the sacristan, confidently. "It was they

who knew what we could do, better, it would seem, than we ourselves. They could finish what we have begun if only your Highness requires it. By whom is it likely that wonder-working powers should be possessed, or the inscription known which was engraved on the seal of Suleyman, the son of Daoud, if not by those at your Highness's left hand?"

Awishalum salaamed to the Pasha, and indicated by an expressive gesture the chief Rabbi and the physician Yakoub, who sat side by side.

A murmur of approval rose from the officials on the platform, and all eyes were turned on Abdallah.

The Pasha was a man who prided himself on jumping to conclusions and carrying them out unswervingly.

"By Allah! thou has said well," he exclaimed. "So shall my desire be accomplished. Nay, I will hear no remonstrances. The task which I set the Christians I now appoint to you. They have accomplished the hardest part. You shall complete it, or, by the beard of the Prophet, you shall defray the whole of the tax!"

A burst of applause followed. Abdallah rose. The soldiers formed. The band struck up "Long live the Sultan!" and amidst the shouts and cheers of the multitude as they began to disperse, the Pasha and the notables swept through the Square, the cavalry clearing the way before them, and disappeared through the great entrance to the palace.

The last of the suite to be lost to the view of our friends on Abou-Seer's house-top was Rustan, who walked gravely along, Mikhel still in charge, with a rear-guard of a score of Bashi-bazouks.

"What think you of that which our eyes have seen to-day, O Muaneddeen?" asked the coffee-shop keeper.

The sage shook his head.

"Everything that is slippery is not a pancake," he replied; "and not every time that the jar is struck doth it escape unbroken."

CHAPTER XI.

THE events which followed may be briefly summarised.

In spite of the protestations of the unfortunate Jews the bear was entrusted to them for the completion of its education. All through the summer this work was supposed to be going on, but to the Pasha's repeated requests to be informed when Rustan should have learned his vowel points, Yakoub and his friends only replied by begging for an extension of time. At length the Pasha became impatient. He swore he would be no longer trifled with. The task must and should be accomplished before the end of his summer residence at Rowandiz. Rustan's new instructors were at their wits' end. They had tried most conscientiously to interest the bear in Arabic literature, and though at first he showed some curiosity apparently, and even turned over a few pages in search of information or dates, his interest soon flagged, the more so because, to win the bear's good opinion as well as that of his master, they kept him well fed. As to obtaining help from the Christians, that they knew was impossible, and Yakoub had tried in vain, by bribes to Gauriel's servants, to find out Mikhel's secret.

At last Abdallah would no longer be put off, and the Jews were commanded to produce Rustan at the palace for a private examination. There being no escape possible from this *habeas corpus* delivery, Yakoub put the best face possible on it and presented himself, together with the chief of his co-religionists. But alas! for their hopes. Rustan had been too well fed to show any curiosity at the sight of a book. He curled himself up in the sun and quietly fell asleep. The Pasha's wrath knew no bounds. Not only had the Jews ignominiously failed in their task, but they had allowed the bear to forget all that he had learnt before. The *defterdan*

had orders to exact the eighty thousand piastres by default, and Abdallah left Rowandiz for the winter, taking Rustan with him to Mosul.

After all, if the Jews could have obtained a few months' prolongation of the time they would have escaped. For, not long after the Pasha reached his winter quarters, he sickened of malaria fever and died. Some said that if the physician who attended him had been a Moslem hakim, and not a friend of Yakoub the Rowandiz Jew, Abdallah would have had a better chance of recovery. But this was, perhaps, only a malicious rumour, for the eighty thousand piastres had been paid.

CHAPTER XII.

THE Bishop had not waited till the end of the summer before giving permission for his nephew's marriage. And the charge of one of the more important villages near Rowandiz having fallen vacant by the death of the priest, he had decided to appoint Mikhel to the post. The wedding was therefore to take place before the young man was admitted to the priesthood, this being a necessary preliminary, according to eastern custom. For Yonan had made no difficulty, and Mariam had given her consent.

The quaint customs of the betrothal had been observed a month ago, and the ring, duly conveyed to the bride by four women friends, had not been refused by her.

At length the happy day arrived. Sidaka seemed to be keeping a general holiday. From outlying farms and neighbouring hamlets, where the wooden huts, with their overhanging roofs, clustered over the steep ravines, men, women and children made the hillside gay with the bright colours of their dresses, in which white and red predominated, as they converged on the pretty plateau where Sidaka nestles in its peach orchards. About an hour after sunrise the sound of trumpets and drums announced the approach of the bridegroom and his friends who were seen, some on foot and some on horseback, making their way up the rough mountain road to the little village church. Another group, in the midst of whom the tall form of Yonan was conspicuous, appeared shortly after, threading their way between the broken walls of the vineyards and the dark-brown barns and houses of Sidaka. There was a general pressing forward of strangers and late comers to the rocky platform outside the church to see the two processions enter, and many were the commendations and blessings bestowed on the principal personages in the little drama. Mikhel certainly bore himself well and looked the picture of happiness; and Yonan, as one of their wealthiest and most popular farmers, was a natural object of pride to the Sidakites. For the bride, much was necessarily left to conjecture as regards looks and ornaments, seeing that she was closely covered with the wedding veil from head to knees. But Mariam was known and loved by all her village, and as she approached the sacred door the women raised that peculiar trilling acclamation customary on such occasions. Yonan bent his head in acknowledgment, and they entered the building in the rear of the bridegroom's procession. And now the service is over, the prayers and antiphons have come to an end, the pinch of sacred earth from the tombs of the martyrs has been thrown into the wine cup in which also the ring has been dipped, and bride and bridegroom have drunk of it, the crowns (that very ancient custom of Christian marriages) have been placed on their heads, and Gauriel, in the best episcopal robes that Rowandiz possessed, has given the final blessing. Last of all, in accordance with a peculiar Syrian custom, the Bishop, and after him all his immediate friends, kissed the bridegroom, and with their right hands touched the head of the bride.

Leaving the church, amidst the renewed acclamations of the people, the bride was now lifted on to a white horse, the saddle gay with embroidery and the bridle hung with bright-coloured tassels and metal pendants, and, to the sound of the drums and trumpets of the bridegroom's party, commenced the descent.

It was a day long remembered in Sidaka, and went far to console many peasants of the mountain village for not having witnessed the great spectacle at Rowandiz. For had not the hero of the latter, the brave deacon who had saved them all from the terrible impost, and who had laid the foundations of literature in the unpromising mind of a bear—though that hopeful undertaking had come to nothing through the stupidity of the Jews—had he not done them the honour of coming to Sidaka for his wife, and all because there was not a girl in Rowandiz to compare with her?

And so ends my story.

Events move so fast, the great world spins so quickly “down the ringing grooves of change,” and Western ideas and knowledge are becoming so widely diffused in the most unlikely quarters, that such an occurrence as I have described would nowadays be quite impossible. Pashas, too, I am glad to say, are less autocratic than I have known them. But I shall never forget the night when, during an excursion among the Ashiret mountains in the early summer of 1860, I heard from the lips of my grey-bearded host—no longer Mikhel the deacon, but Mikhel the old village priest—the story of how Rustan learned to read.

THE END.

NOTE.

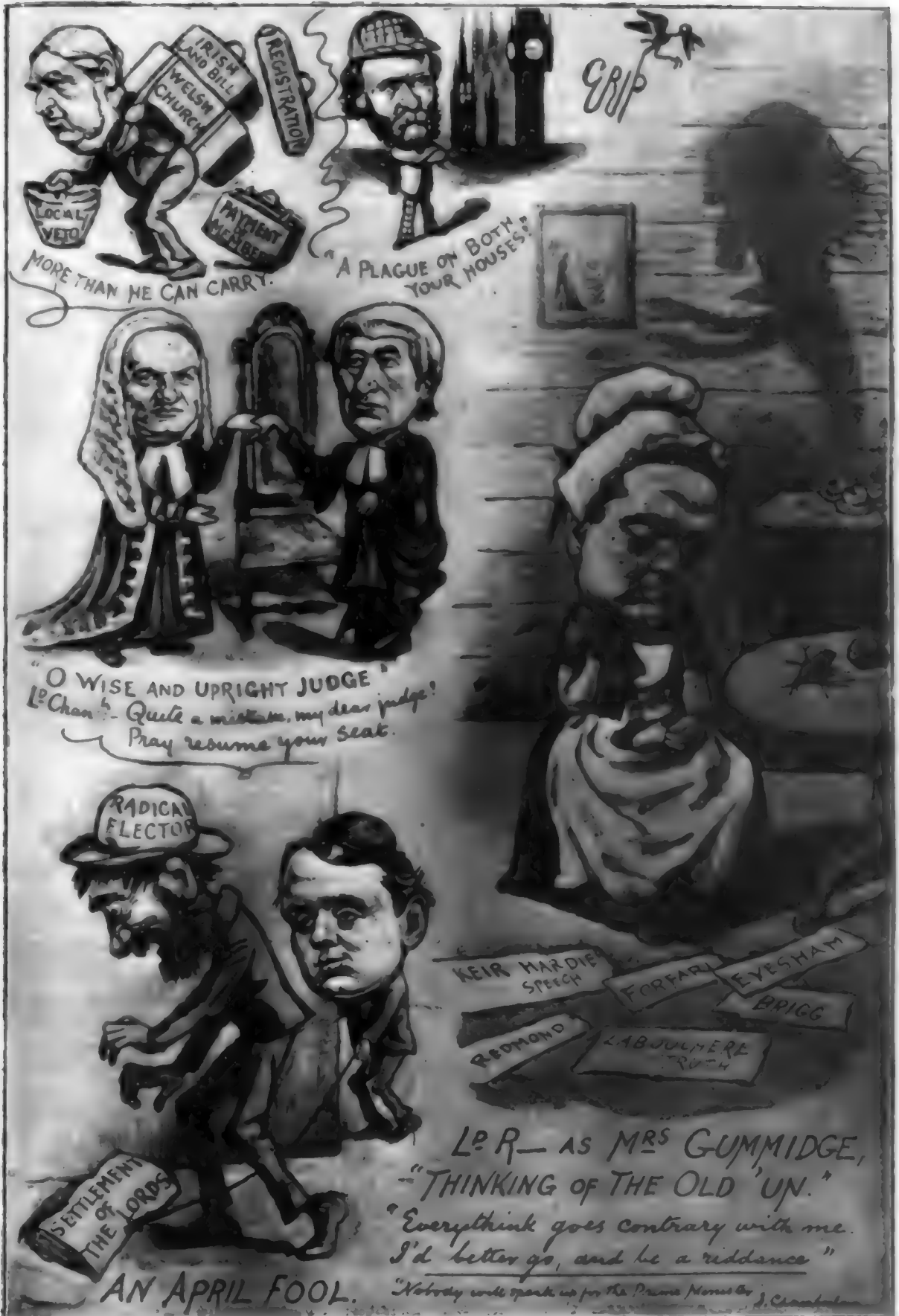
By the courtesy of the Editor I am allowed to add a few words:—“Rustan” was written, it need hardly be said, before the late deplorable events in Armenia, and, except so far as it refers incidentally to the relations of the different nationalities and religions in that part of the Turkish Empire, has no bearing on them whatever.

If it were not so obviously a simple “récit pour rire” as to make a graver expression of opinion in this place a little incongruous, the writer would like to say how earnestly he hopes that a wise and temperate interposition on the part of the Western Powers may result in establishing—what all sensible Moslems as well as Christians must desire—not only a “modus vivendi” for the different religions concerned, but an equitable and just system of administration (such as our own in India) for the various races within its borders. Weakness and corruption of the central government lead inevitably (as they did thirty-five years ago in the Lebanon) to robberies, reprisals, and massacre; and one of Lord Dufferin’s earliest claims on the gratitude and admiration of his countrymen is based on the firmness with which he acted when called on, as British Commissioner, to deal with a somewhat similar state of things in Syria.

Why should the mode of remedying the crying sufferings of mankind be made for ever a subject of party politics?

W. W.





"Where Merchants most do Congregate."

[*The Merchant of Venice.*

THE COAL EXCHANGE.

BY FREDERICK DOLMAN.

Illustrated from Photographs by Barrauds, Limited, Mr. John Jones, &c.

AS one of the municipal institutions of the "Old" City of London the Coal Exchange has a close relationship to that control over the trade in "black diamonds," which finally came to an end with the discontinuance of the unpopular Coal Dues. The building at the corner of St. Mary-at-Hill and Lower Thames Street, of which every London householder must have heard, though it has probably been seen by few, can now be said to serve as a memorial of the prescriptive privilege of the City Corporation from the early years of Elizabeth to the later years of Victoria, to measure and tax the fuel of Londoners. The Exchange itself is not yet fifty years old ; it was built in 1848—9 out of the proceeds of a special tax of one penny a ton, levied for several years by the Corporation on all coal brought to London. From the early years of the century until that date the Exchange had its *habitat* in an old building in St. Botolph's Lane, and before this the coal merchants and factors managed to transact their business in the open air on the quayside.

To this *al fresco* Exchange reference is made by Strype:—"And here the coalmen and woodmongers meet every morning about eight or nine o'clock, this place being the exchange for the coal trade, which brings a great resort of people, and occasions a great trade to the inhabitants. This place is now more frequented than in ancient times when Queenhithe was made use of for the same purpose, this being more commodious. And, therefore, it was ordained to be the only port for all such sorts of merchandise." From these words of the old writer it will be rightly inferred that in the reign of Queen Anne wood was almost as important an article of fuel to the people of London as coal, most traders dealing in both articles of merchandise, and it may be added that in Strype's time the immediate neighbourhood of the present Coal Exchange was called "Romeland," from the numerous relics of Roman London which had been found there. Of the manners and customs of the coal trade in the last century we get a glimpse in a passage from a writer of rather a later date:—"Whenever a factor could get one, two, three, or four buyers who engaged to take a cargo of coals he got them to a public house in the neighbourhood. The first thing to do was to order something to eat and drink, the factor to pay for the room; and they sometimes concluded a bargain. At other times they parted without making a bargain, but the factor always paid the expenses, and they made a private bargain in the best way they could." It was possibly the factors' objection to "the expenses" of comfortable shelter always falling upon them which led to the establishment of an Exchange with a roof and walls. On the other hand, it is to be feared that at the Coal Exchange, as in most other places, much business is still transacted with the assistance of "something to drink."

At the present day most people who visit the Coal Exchange for the first time must give thought, in making their way to Lower Thames Street, to its inconvenient and out-of-the-way position. This can hardly be made a matter of reproach to its builders, however, for a revolution in the London coal trade has occurred since the Exchange was opened by the Prince Consort, with much pomp and circumstance, in 1849. At that time, with the railways in their infancy, practically the whole of London's coal was brought by sea from different ports, and there were few who

foresaw that before many years passed two-thirds of it would be conveyed by train from inland collieries. The riverside had naturally become the mart for coal, and the City Fathers would have been bold, indeed, if, in anticipation of a new order of things, they had built the Exchange at some other part of the town, nearer the great railway termini from the North. It was then extremely doubtful whether railways would ever prove very successful competitors with collier vessels, and in point of freight charges it is still cheaper to bring a ton of coal 200 miles by sea than 100 miles by land. But the last half-century has witnessed a great development of the mineral wealth of the Midlands, and experience has shown that although the railway truck may cost 7s. or 8s. a ton and the steam collier only 4s. or 5s. a ton the difference is more nominal than real. There is much less waste by breakage in the former case; the coal is usually delivered at the railway depôt in much better condition than on the river wharf.

Having been built with the pence of the people, the London Corn Exchange is open to all comers on the three days—Monday, Wednesday and Friday—which custom has set aside for its business. Anyone and everyone can go there to buy or to sell without the payment of fee or the observance of rule. As a matter of fact one will find the same faces there Monday after Monday, Wednesday after Wednesday and Friday after Friday. The first mentioned is by far the busiest day; on Monday railway agents and others come to London from provincial towns to attend both the Corn Exchange and the Coal Exchange, and on Monday the prices of coal are subject to revision by an informal conference of colliery agents and factors.

On ascending the well-worn steps and entering the Exchange the stranger is probably surprised by the lightness and brightness of the interior. Externally the grimy stone harmonises only too well with one's general impression of the trade to which the building is dedicated. But inside, if it is not exactly all "sweetness and light," there is for London quite a bright contrast. The glass cupola and dome illuminate a spacious rotunda, whose walls are gaily decorated in Raphaelesque style by views of the principal coal ports and important collieries and allegorical sketches illustrating the mining industry and heraldic devices of the Corporation to which the Exchange belongs. The Exchange has three galleries from which admission is obtained to a large number of offices let by the Corporation to firms and societies connected with the coal trade. Viewed from the highest of these galleries, the scene below—say at 3 p.m. on a Monday afternoon—is not without its effectiveness. About 600 men fill almost every available bit of floor space. Nearly everyone carries a pocket-book, and a few are engaged in examining samples of coal displayed on several small



THE LONDON COAL EXCHANGE

counters placed there for common use and convenience. The talk between groups of two or three is incessant, and causes a loud hum to ascend, whose monotony is frequently broken by laughter. There is considerable variety in the mass of slowly-moving figures in both age and attire, physique and manner. Dealings in coal, by means of pencil and paper, seemingly leaves no trade mark on those who carry them on. Every now and then a diversion is caused by a yell from the principal entry. It is one or the other of two beadles shouting the name of a gentleman for whom enquiry is being made, or for whom a telegram has arrived. The Corporation has appointed these beadles specially for such duties, but nervous visitors to the market have sometimes regarded them with guilty looks, supposing that it was their function to warn off intruders. Without their help it would be often difficult on the Coal Exchange to distinguish the individual from the mass.

If the floor of the Exchange were at all visible at this moment one could not but remark its picturesque formation. It is in the shape of a mariner's compass, with the City Arms in the centre, and was made of 4,000 separate blocks of wood, including ebony, black oak, red oak, wainscot, white holly, mahogany, red walnut, mulberry and American elm. All this wood was growing in the forest a few months before the building of the Exchange, in 1849, with the remarkable exceptions of a tree supposed to have been planted by Peter the Great when working in a ship-yard at Deptford, and of another very old tree raised from the bed of the River Tyne. The age of this tree, which was presented to the Coal Exchange by the Corporation of Newcastle, could only be guessed, but it was supposed to have been quite four or five hundred years old when it fell.

The freedom of the Coal Exchange has been almost fatal to the growth of any *esprit de corps* among its frequenters. There is naturally but little feeling of fellowship among a body which can be joined at any moment by the man in the street, and such as does exist is dependent upon three societies having rooms at the Coal Exchange—viz.: the Coal Merchants' Society, the Coal Factors' Society, and the Inland Colliery Owners' Subscription. These societies can confer upon their members, of course, no greater privilege in respect to the Exchange than they would otherwise possess, beyond the use of the rooms which they rent from the Corporation.

The two first-named societies have had a very much longer existence than the Coal Exchange. Although the Minutes for an earlier date than 1859 have unfortunately been lost, there is no doubt that the Coal Merchants' Society was flourishing in the last century, and there is some reason to think that in some form or other it has existed ever since the reign of Charles II. If all its officers had had the zeal and intelligence of Mr. G. C. Locket, the present hon. secretary of the Society, it would probably now be able to produce documentary evidence in proof of its antiquity. The duties of the office are more onerous than might be supposed, and in performing them Mr. Locket must evidently be actuated by a strong desire for a closer union among the merchants who mingle together at the Coal Exchange. The Society has now a membership of 120, but this small number is increasing. Until the last year or so the Society, for some reason or other, good or bad, was dominated by an exclusive feeling, and only coal merchants of the first rank could obtain election, the power of "blackballing" being freely exercised several times in succession and without mercy. A broader view now prevails, and the object is to make the Society as representative as possible of the coal merchants of London.



MR. A. P. WOOD,
CHAIRMAN INLAND COLLIERY OWNERS'
SUBSCRIPTION ROOM

It should be added, however, that the term "coal merchants" does not seem to possess at the Coal Exchange quite so much elasticity as with the general public. There it does not include the large class of vendors of coal who do not buy direct of the collieries, and have no wharves or depôts of their own; these gentlemen are sometimes referred to, with more than a *souçon* of contempt, as "brass-plate coal merchants."



MR. E. T. WILKS

The Coal Merchants' Society rents a room on the ground floor of the Exchange for the use of members who may wish to write a letter, read a paper, or converse with more privacy and quietude than can be obtained in the midst of the gabbling crowd without. But the most important services it renders to its members concern the amicable settlement of business disputes, and the taking of united action in matters threatening their trade interests. If coal is alleged to be of inferior quality to that represented, for instance, the parties will probably go to Mr. Locket and through him arrange to have it "surveyed" by two or more well experienced and highly respected members of the Society. And when the coal porters came out "on strike" in sympathy with the dock labourers, the coal merchants found their Society of great value in bringing about a speedy termination of the trouble.



MR. EDWIN A. CORNWALL, L.C.C.

At one time the Coal Factors' Society was the all-powerful body on the Exchange, but with the change of transit from sea to land its members have become fewer and fewer. The factors who still remain and divide between them the business in such seaborne coal as is sold on the Exchange are now regarded as a small and exclusive aristocracy whose affections are centred in the past. The decline of the Coal Factors' Society has been the rise of the Inland Colliery Owners' Society. This was established in 1848, when the first truck-load of coal, carefully covered by tarpaulin, was brought into London by the newly-opened London and Birmingham Railway. It has a subscription room on the ground floor of the Exchange, which forms a meeting place for colliery owners and their representatives, where all questions relating to London prices, &c., can be settled. Mr. A. P. Wood is chairman of this association, Mr. W. W. Matthewman vice-chairman; whilst Mr. E. T. Wilks has been honorary secretary and treasurer since its foundation. Its annual dinner, it may be added, has become a much-

valued occasion, on which, representatives of the various interests of the Coal Exchange meet together in the spirit of good-fellowship and mutual enjoyment.

The Coal Merchants' Society and the Coal Factors' Society co-operate in the management of the Meters' Office. At one time the City Corporation exercised the right of weighing or measuring all the coal which came into the port of London, its

charge of eightpence per ton for metage yielding a handsome profit to the municipal coffers. In course of time, with the growth of trade, it became a most vexatious impost, and about sixty years ago the Corporation consented to commute this and other dues into the one tax, which was payable until about four years ago. But, although the necessity of having every ton of coal officially weighed was a serious hindrance to trade, there was obviously great advantage in some cases in having the weight of a consignment tested and certified by some trustworthy authority. Accordingly the two societies joined together in appointing a committee, under whose direction meters should be engaged to weigh coal, whenever their services were required, at a charge sufficient to defray the expense. Most merchants in a large way of business have their own weighing machines at their wharves and depôts, but even in such cases the services of the official meters are requisitioned by customers, who wish to have a question of weight thus authoritatively settled. The Meters' Committee consists of twenty members, half chosen by the Coal Merchants' and half by the Coal Factors' Society. It has a staff of sixteen men, most of whom have spent the greater part of their lives in its service. The work is irregular, sometimes light and sometimes very heavy, and in the winter-time exposes the men to the full brunt of bad weather. But as wages go, the meters are well paid, and in the way of pensions they are exceptionally well provided for. They have to report themselves to an officer on the second floor of the Coal Exchange, where Mr. Newman, the manager, and an assistant, receive the applications for their services.

In the second gallery of the Exchange there is something to prove that, notwithstanding the want of an *esprit de corps*, its frequenters



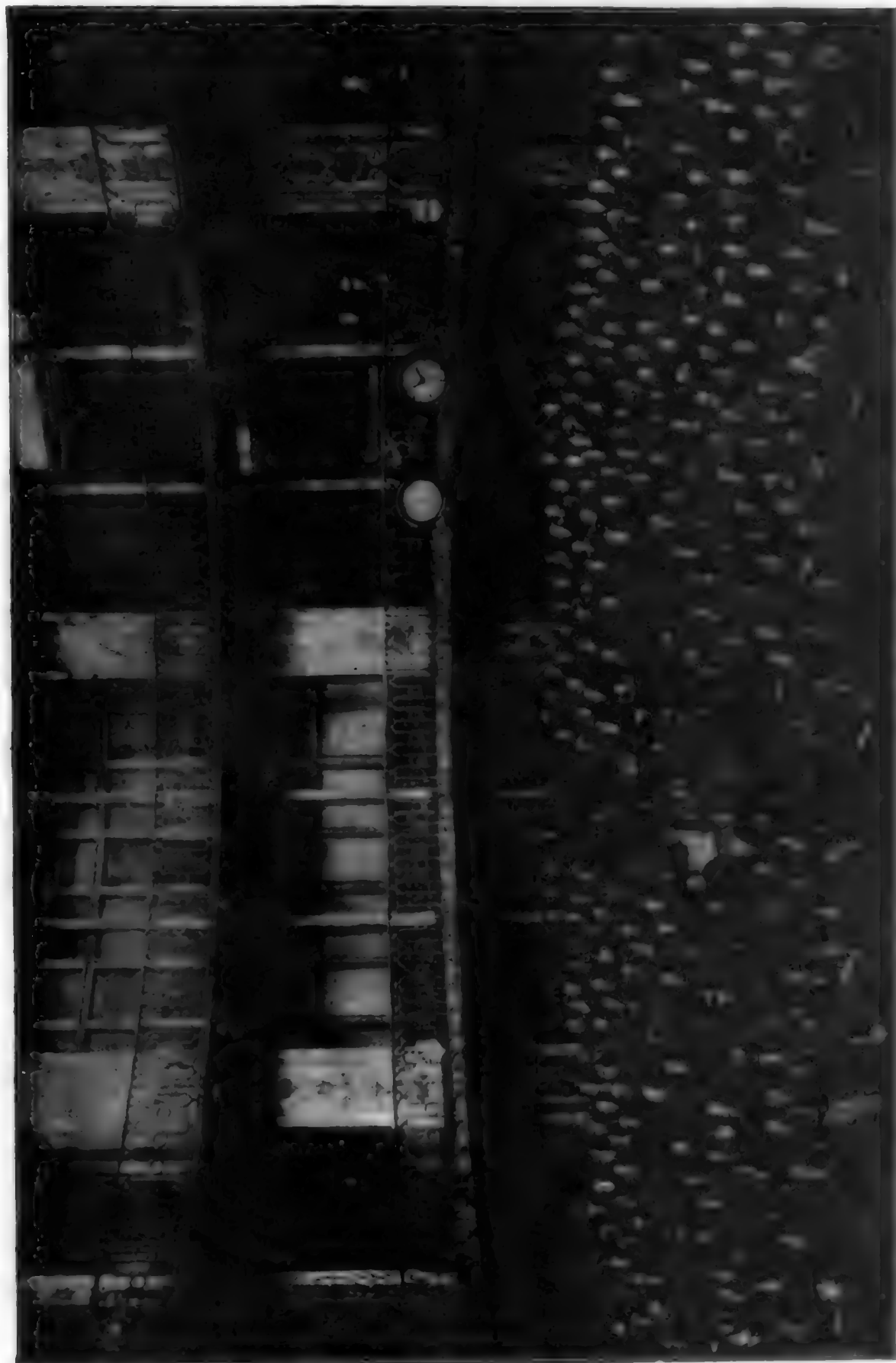
MR. G. J. WOOD



MR. W. W. MATTHEWMAN

can on occasions combine for other than business purposes. It is the model of the Southwold Lifeboat, *The Coal Exchange*, placed in a glass case with an illuminated address from the Council of the National Lifeboat Institution, which informs us that the craft was built and presented to the Institution as the result of a fund raised on the Coal Exchange some years ago. In subscribing to this fund, coal merchants and factors doubtless felt, that they were but acknowledging the courage and hardihood of the men who man the North Sea colliers and endure the danger of storm and gale in providing the Exchange with business.

In other ways the frequenters of the Coal Exchange have joined together for purposes of common interest. A year or so ago they established the Coal Trade Benevolent Association for the assistance of widows and orphans, and any cases of necessity among its members. This society, which may be described as a promising infant, has brought about an annual cricket match between colliery agents and coal merchants, the proceeds augmenting the, at present, very limited funds. Then two City missionaries are entirely supported by subscriptions from the Coal Exchange, on the understanding that, they shall work among the men employed at the various coal depôts and sidings on the railways. It need hardly be said that on the occasion of every colliery disaster a fund is opened on the Coal Exchange; and whilst visiting it for the purpose of this article a subscription list was going its round for the help of the sufferers from the awful accident at Audley mine.



INTERIOR OF THE LONDON COAL EXCHANGE (FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BAKKAUIS, LTD.)

Since the discontinuance of the Coal Dues the occupation of Mr. J. B. Scott, the clerk to the Coal Exchange, has almost entirely gone. Instead of a suite of offices and a staff of assistants, Mr. Scott is in possession of two small rooms on the third gallery. "My post is now almost a sinecure," he frankly confesses; "limited, indeed, to the management of the seventy or eighty offices in the Exchange and the collection of the rents." These amounted in 1893 to £2,157, whilst the expenditure on the Exchange only fell short of this amount by £33. Mr. Scott is a nephew of the late City Chamberlain, Mr. Benjamin Scott, and a portrait of this widely-esteemed gentleman hangs in his room. Although its duties are now light, his position as the representative of the Corporation is still one of some responsibility. A short time ago, for instance, he had to interpose in arrangements that were being made, for the holding of a meeting of the coal trade at the Exchange, with reference to the question of railway rates. Mr. Scott declared that no such meeting could be held on the Exchange, the free use of which by the public was strictly confined to the buying and selling of coal. The promoters did not appeal to the Coal, Corn, and Finance Committee (in whose management the Exchange has been placed by the Corporation), but accepted Mr. Scott's decision, and held the meeting at the Cannon Street Hotel.

The question of railway rates is one of very great interest among the merchants of the Coal Exchange. The companies have, in effect though not in words, made a serious increase recently in their charges for the conveyance of coal. It was long the practice of the collieries to send 21 cwt. of coal to the ton, an allowance of 1 cwt. being made in respect to "wastage." For some reason or other the mine-owners' score has been discontinued, and in executing their orders 20 cwt. and only 20 cwt. is weighed to the ton. Prices have, of course, adjusted themselves accordingly, but the railway companies have refused to make any corresponding reduction in freight charge; the merchant has now to pay as much for the conveyance of 20 tons of coal from Staffordshire as he used to pay for 21 tons. As the result there has been a considerable increase in the imports of seaborne coal into London, and there are prophets on 'Change who make bold to say that, a time is coming when it will again outweigh that which is brought along the iron road. But decreasing traffic will probably have much more influence over the minds of railway directors than all the eloquence of the Coal Exchange.

There is seldom any excitement on the Coal Exchange. Prices are regularly fixed and violent fluctuations never occur. It is only at times of conflict between Labour and Capital that the even tenour of the market is disturbed, and at such times, of course, there is the greatest anxiety to buy and sell wisely and well. During the great strike of two years ago prices went up to 40s. and 50s. a ton, and men came on to the Exchange day after day with troubled and careworn countenances, for while a few made fortunes during the crisis, others who were handicapped by contracts were heavy losers. This was the most exciting time the Exchange had had since the coal famine of the early seventies, when the best Wallsend changed hands at three guineas the ton.

There is one feature of the Coal Exchange worthy of some notice. Its leading men have for generations belonged to comparatively few families. The business descends almost invariably from father to son. Mr. Locket, the secretary of the Coal Merchants' Society, who belongs to the firm of Locket and Judkins, and his predecessor in that office, Mr. G. R. Carter, who is head of the firm of G. R. Carter and Sons, are representatives of two of the most distinguished of these old families. On resigning the secretaryship, Mr. Carter was elected president of the Coal Merchants' Society and since the retirement from business of an octogenarian veteran he has been dubbed "Father of the Coal Exchange."

As I have said, there is considerable discontent among the coal trade of London with the non-central site of their business centre. In recent years various tentative efforts have been made to bring about a removal, and one wealthy firm has gone so



MR. THOMAS W. GRAY

far as to offer to build a new Exchange in the vicinity of the termini of the Great Northern, the Midland, and the London and North Western Railways. But this generous offer came to nothing, owing to the strong desire that the Exchange should still be situated within the boundaries of the City. In the event of the abandonment of the present Exchange its site would probably be utilised in an extension of Billingsgate Market. But such an event may be long deferred, if only because of the sentimental ties which the older men on the Exchange have formed with the present building.

When this event does occur the antiquarian will probably have to be on the alert for the preservation of that historical relic with the inspection of which the stranger's visit to the Coal Exchange usually includes. This is the Roman Bath discovered by the workmen who were engaged in excavating the foundations of the building in 1847-8. Up to the present,

excellent care has been taken of what is supposed to be the only remaining relic of an important Roman official's residence in the time of Londinum. It is worth while descending into this gloomy cavern to take note of the crumbling stone and the broken tessellated pavement, if only by way of contrast to the busy scene above.

A Little Sailor Hat.

BY MRS. ALFRED HART.

Author of "A Double Ruin," "A Modern Martyr," "Tired Love," &c., &c.

—♦—
"MA BELLE AMIE EST MORTE."

THEY had been married six short months and they were saying their first good-bye. In Malta harbour the great battle-ship *Rameses* was waiting to bear away the sailor husband, and the young wife was clinging to him as though she could never, never let him go. For six long months they were to remain apart. How could she endure it? They had been so happy, their white stone house so charming, and now this sudden blow had fallen upon them, and in an hour he would be gone from her.

She is not a pretty woman, as the term of prettiness goes, but there is a fascination about the resolute grey eyes and sweet, fair brow, before which more vulgar charms pale. Her hair is black, abundant and curly; her mouth very firm and true. She is young, barely twenty, and her name is Estelle.

He is ten years her senior, and looks brave, and honest, and loyal—a thorough English gentleman, and a sailor every inch of him. He worships his wife, and through her holds the whole sex in reverence. No one ever hears him speak lightly of a woman, and all envy his happiness.

It is one of those beautiful, cloudless April days; a day when the sky is one vault of blue and the sea gentle as a sleeping child. Within Estelle's sitting-room the scent of violets is strong, and the sun gleams fiercely through the latticed window and touches up with burning ray each frame and knicknack in the familiar chamber.

Husband and wife walk around their little Eden looking at each pretty trifle with regretful eyes, finally pausing before something covered up with spotless cambric. Shyly Estelle lifts the white pall, and then both silently look down at a pink lined basket, and a tiny, tiny garment in which a needle is still sticking.

"When you come back there will be two to take care of," whispers the wife; and then she realises that in her hour of peril she will be without him.

"Hush, dear; my dear, do not cry. Oh, you break my heart! Think, little woman, what a grand time we will have when I do return! Baby's little baby—how I shall love it! And will it really wear this little shift? What a funny little thing—what a blessed little thing! You are going to be my brave girlie, my darling, my sweet martyr, and God will help you. Cruel? I know it's cruel, dear, but you are a sailor's wife, and I have a sailor's duty to perform. You must write to me every day, and tell me every incident of your little white life—how you hold yourself proud and aloof from all other men—and all your dreams and hopes. And when I keep my watch at night I will pray for you—and you for me? Good-bye, darling, good-bye."

He is gone.

Is it possible, she thinks, and looks round the room with wide, pitiful eyes. Is it possible that many days must pass ere she hears his step upon the stairs, and the well-known whistle which he always gives in signal of his approach, and which she delights to answer? Will the great armchair remain empty for so long, and the briar pipes unsmoked? She flung herself down beside the chair, and a trembling runs through her frame. She sobs—dear Lord how she sobs!—and the great ship *Rameses* bears away her love, her joy, and her life.

But during the weeks that follow she strives to be gay and to think bravely of the future. She tends her flowers and works at baby's garments, and, though the

opportunities are many, but rarely goes into the world. Knowing that she was a young wife and lonely, women who held their husbands of small account, and men who in their idleness thought of other men's wives, came to see her; only to leave, piqued and baffled by her air of incorruptible dignity.

Not for Estelle the subtle flatterers that blend the insidious words that mar; not for her the admiration that insults, the sentiment that nauseates. She would none of them, this little proud lady. She saw but one fair head, heard but one voice, and strove daily to be more worthy of the absent one. She held peculiarly exalted views upon the wonder of motherhood, and into the airy trifles for the child to come she stitched many beautiful thoughts. Her one prayer was that she might guide the little one aright, that she might make it see the beauties as well as the burdens of life: teach it that the flaunting poppies of pleasure hold a deadly poison, and the simple briar rose is a fitter emblem to wear at one's breast. O yes! she would talk to it of the silent land which none should regard with terror because of the peace it brings. Her child should love the dear Lord who was crucified, and follow in his footsteps.

Thus she mused, and prayed and dreamed, while the lonely days waned into weeks, the weeks into months. She wrote to her husband long letters full of wifely sweetness and holy reminiscences. She was pleased to recall the days of their wooing, the books they had read and the many excursions they, together, had made. He was just her life, and the thought of him nerved her for all agony to come.

And the husband, as these messages reached him, felt that he could have died for her. She was his religion, and life was sanctified for her dear sake. Although he was more reticent of expression, he was keenly conscious of the charm of her messages; they breathed the perfume of the fresh glad days of their courtship, and the scent of spring flowers. And he yearned exceedingly



"GOOD-BYE, DARLING, GOOD-BYE"

to be with her, to meet again the frank smile of welcome, to feel the touch of her hand across his brow. Aye, life without Estelle: it would be impossible.

But God judged otherwise.

Perhaps He saw that the beautiful soul of this girl wife might be warped if left longer to fight the stern battle of life. Perhaps He had need of her and her little one while her record was yet so spotless, and her passion of happiness undimmed by disillusion.

I know not. His ways are strange and He leads His children by divers paths: through sorrow, and sickness, and suffering; and to those left behind, He often appears to choose the fairest flower.

Thus it came to pass, that as the time of Estelle's trial approached, she grew wan and piteously weak. The hot scirocco that wrapped the island as in a shroud, made her droop and droop, and droop till she saw no joy in life, and her courage deserted her.

One cry was in her heart, though she never spoke it, and that was for her husband.

She knew that he would come too late. With that strange pre-

science that is often given to women she felt that at the last her strength would fail her, that for a little life her life would be demanded in exchange. Already she looked upon herself as one dead, and wept, not for herself, but for him, his ruined hopes, his lonely, sea-girt life.

And then one night a sable presence that had been hovering upon the threshold of the white house, entered, and slowly ascended the steps.

It paused outside a



"WROTE LONG LETTERS"

little bedroom door as if in pity for the struggle going on within, and then, for very pity of that struggle, softly entered. Slowly it approaches the couch where lies a little mother and her dead, new born babe. Gently it touches the eyelids heavy with agony, softly it kisses the sweet pale mouth.

"Sleep, little mother, sleep," it whispered, and Estelle smiled and died.

They laid them to rest in a small church-yard near the sea; kind friends sent flowers, and the little grave was as a white altar.

Then they thought of the husband and wondered what he would say—do. There had been no means of communicating the sad news; only on landing would he learn the whole terrible truth—and then—"God help him," they sighed.

He had every need of God's help. On approaching the island there had looked across the sea a young strong man rich in the thought of possessing a wife and child. Half-an-hour later he was leaning against his narrow bunk, a letter clenched in his hand, woe immeasurable in his heart.

Outside life seemed at its brightest; eager feet were leaving the ship, greetings

were being exchanged, and the sun was shining, the flowers blooming, just as when he left.

But *she* is dead.

Presently he raised his head and stood aimlessly in his little cabin. With an almost demented gesture he kept on passing his hand down his cheek as if to assure himself that it had not shrunk away, and through the dry lips came one harsh cry, "Estelle, dead." Over and over again he repeated it till the very heavens seemed to echo the plaint, and he thought he should go mad.

Then, he knew not how, but he found himself stumbling over the side of the vessel and being rowed towards the shore—where once had lived his hopes and now lay buried joy. Up the stone steps that led to the town he climbed. Most anxiously he sought the well-known street that now held for him but a grave. And then kind hands opened the door; pitying faces greeted him. But he waved aside all well-meaning folk. What sympathy could console him? Estelle was dead!

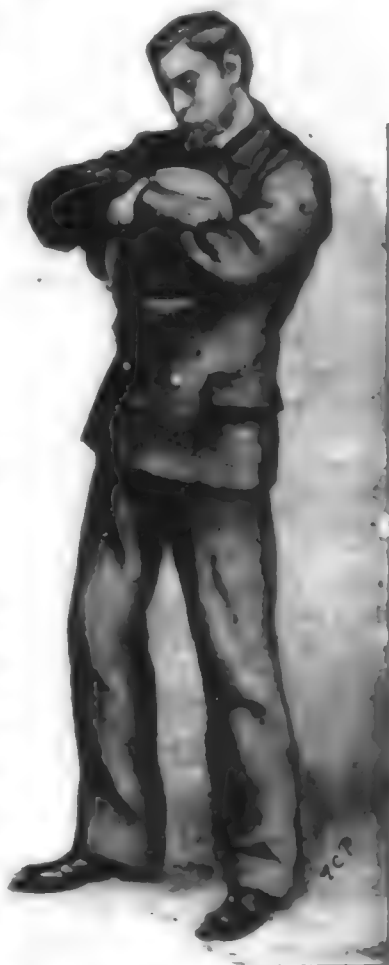
At last he reached their room, and quietly he took a chair and sat down. Surely she would come to him—come as of yore, and, twining her arms round his throat, whisper, "It is I, dear."

But suddenly the years rolled out before him in a vista of barren solitude, and he saw himself as he would be: alone—always alone. Never more for him the touch of clinging lips, the trip of willing feet, the caress of dainty hand. Never more would he experience the zest of working for another's welfare; never more dream of a child's love. All his life seemed crowded into one short volume, and now across it he must inscribe "Finis." In his pain he might well cry:—

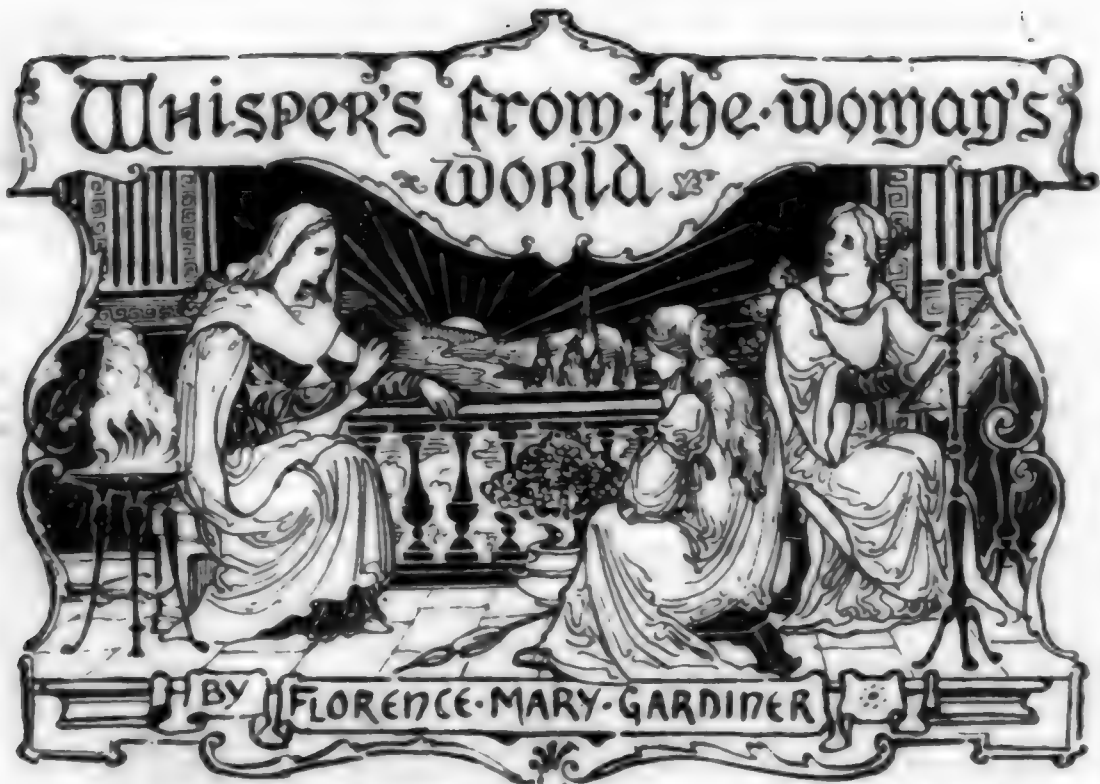
"A little mound of earth
Is all the land I own;
Death gave it me—five feet by three
And mark'd it with a stone."

An hour passed. He had shed no tear, made no moan; he only felt that he must go round and seek some little evidence of her past presence—work that she had sat over, a book she, perhaps, had read. But he found nothing—nothing but boxes locked and corded, in which reverent hands had laid his darling's things. Oh, to touch something she had worn—to kiss something she had kissed! God, his heart would burst! And just as he was beginning to despair of finding a trifle he could at once possess, he opened an old wardrobe, and hanging quite alone on a peg was a little sailor hat. He took it down, laid it to his breast, and folded his arms across it. The little hat she had once worn in the enjoyment of her beauty, her gaiety and her youth.

Suddenly into the silence there came a sound. It came from a soul in agony. It wailed through the quiet house and then passed away. And far into the night he lay prone, clasping to his breast that little sailor hat.



"FOLDED HIS ARMS ACROSS IT"



THE EVOLUTION OF FASHION.

PART XII.—ECCENTRICITIES OF MASCULINE COSTUME (*continued*).

TOWARDS the end of the 14th century men began to wear short clothes made to fit the body so closely that it often required the assistance of two people to remove them, and it is from this period we can distinctly trace the difference between ancient and modern dress; in fact, our present fashions—masculine and feminine—resemble, to a certain extent, those worn during mediæval times. Then, as now, men wore overcoats with tight sleeves, felt hats (with feathers worn over a skull cap, and slung behind the back), and closely-fitting shoes and boots.

The Tudor monarchs paid considerable attention to the adornment of their persons, and were responsible for stringent legal enactments calculated to encourage home manufactures. Felt hat-making—one of our oldest industries—was introduced into this country from Spain and Holland. A great impetus was given to this branch of trade by a law passed in 1571 which enjoined "every person above the age of seven years to wear on Sundays or holidays a cap of wool, knit made,

thickened and dressed in England by some of the trade of cappers, under the forfeiture of three farthings for every day's neglect." In 1603 the felt-makers became a Corporation with grants and many privileges. Throughout the Middle Ages the upper classes frequently engaged in commerce. Bishops, abbots and nobles personally superintended the disposal of the produce of their estates, and a considerable number of the younger sons of



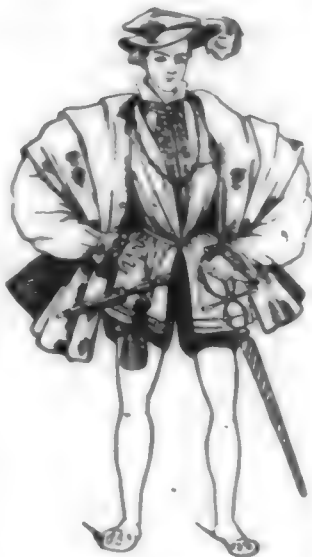
COSTUME OF THE REIGN OF HENRY VII.

good families were the leading traders of the 15th and 16th centuries.

The "frocke" frequently mentioned, and of which the modern frock-coat is the degenerate descendant, was a sort of jacket or jerkin made occasionally with skirts, a style associated especially with Holbein's portraits of Henry VIII. and his contemporaries.

The uniform worn at the present day by the Yeomen of the Guard stationed at the Tower of London gives us the military costume of the Tudor period. It is the oldest corps in Her Majesty's service, and was instituted by Henry VII. as the body-guard of the sovereign.

In the dress of the Bluecoat Boys at Christ's Hospital we have that of the citizens of London during the reign of Edward VI. and Mary, when blue coats were habitually used by apprentices and serving men; yellow stockings also were in common use. The badges on the jackets of firemen and watermen date from this time; they were made of metal and placed on the sleeve, in the 16th century, instead of being embroidered on the back or breast of the garment as they had been previously. Retainers in the households of the wealthy were provided with surcoats and mantles twice a year of their patron's favourite colour, and this was called the *livrée*, from a French word signifying to distribute. Trade guilds and members of the learned professions also adopted a distinct style of costume. Lawyers, who were originally priests, of course wore the tonsure; but when the clergy ceased to interfere



EARL OF SURREY
TIME OF HENRY VIII.

with secular affairs the lay lawyer continued this sign of office and also wore a coif. Their gowns were capacious and lined with fur. And the Justices of the King's Bench were allowed liveries by the King of cloth and silk. Budge, or lambskin, and miniver were provided for the trimming thereof, and the colour appears to have varied in different reigns, but for a long time green prevailed.

The courtiers of Elizabeth discarded the "frocke cote" for quilted and stuffed doublets and trunk hose slashed and ornamented in the most quaint and extravagant manner. Below these were worn stockings em-

broidered with birds, beasts, and other devices, "sewed up close thereto as though they were all of one piece." Trunk

hose were appropriately named, as they were often filled with wool, bran, and other materials. At last they became of such enormous size that it was necessary to construct swings in the Houses of Parliament in place of the ordinary fixed seats, for the accommodation of those wearing this singular article of attire. Enormous ruffs of muslin and lace encircled the necks of dandies of the Elizabethan era, and they appear to have had waists which would excite the envy of the belles of the latter part of the 19th century. In fact, the gallants of that day were even in advance of the fair sex in their love of fantastic costume; and as Hollingshead, in *The Chronicle*, justly states with reference to the fashions of the period: "Nothing was more constant in England than inconstancy of attire."

A few years since, behind some ancient panelling at Haddon Hall, Derbyshire, was discovered a washing bill (with other things appertaining to the 16th and 17th centuries) which gives us a good idea of the various articles of dress then worn. Reference is made to the *ruff*, which is too well known to need description; to *bandes* made of linen and



CHARLES I.



COURTIER IN THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH

cambric, from which those now used by the clergy took their origin, and from which we derive the modern word bandbox. There were three kinds—some that stood upright, others were allowed to lie flat upon the shoulders, as shown in the drawings of Charles I. and II., and those which were embroidered and trimmed with lace. The *skirt* applied to the undergarment of both sexes, and the half-shirt referred to the stomacher over which the dress was laced. *Boot hose* were made of a variety of materials, and were occasionally called nether stocks; *socks* were sometimes put over them; and *tops* were of Holland linen or lace, and formed the lining of the full hanging boots of the Cavaliers.

During the Civil War the dress worn by the King's adherents consisted of a doublet of silk

the former fashion, a revival of an old Roman custom, had political significance according to where they were placed on the face, and were bitterly ridiculed by numerous satirical writers. "I know many young gentlemen," says Middleton, in one of his plays, "who wear longer hair than their mistresses." The beard was worn in different ways, but the most usual shape was what Beaumont and Fletcher, in their "Queen of Corinth," call the T beard, consisting of a moustache and imperial:—

"His beard,
"Which now he put i' the form of a T,
The Roman T; your T beard is the fashion,
And two-fold doth express the enamoured courtier."

Shakespeare also tells us it was often dyed different colours.

Everyone tried to rival his neighbour in the



CHARLES II. AND HIS QUEEN (1660)



WILLIAM III. (1694)



GENTLEMAN AND LADY OF 18TH CENTURY

or satin with loose sleeves, slashed up the front; the collar was generally of point lace and a short cloak rested carelessly on one shoulder. The hat was a broad brimmed beaver with a plume of feathers, and trunk hose gave way to breeches. The Roundheads or Republican Party went to the opposite extreme. They cut their hair close, avoided lace and jewels, had plain linen or cloth suits of a grey or brown tint, with a hat somewhat resembling the modern chimney pot.

About this period we also hear of the waistcoat which was cut high at the neck and was made with sleeves. Neckcloths and cravats of Brussels and Flanders lace were tied in a knot under the chin, and had square ends. Another peculiar feature of masculine costume towards the end of the 17th century consisted of petticoat breeches with drooping lace ruffles, such as adorn the nether limbs of Charles II. Patches and perukes were also adopted, and

size of his peruke, till they became so preposterous that Charles II. showed his disfavour by writing a letter to the University of Cambridge forbidding the members to wear periwigs, smoke tobacco, or read their sermons. History does not relate what effect the King's censure had upon the head-gear of students attending the colleges, but it is absolutely proved that they paid no heed to his latter commands. It was the fashion for men to comb their perukes in public, and curiously-chased combs of bone and tortoise-shell were carried in the pocket with the snuff-box, another indispensable appendage of a fine gentleman.

In the 18th century the broad hat brims were turned up at the sides and, in the language of the day, each gallant cocked his hat according to his fancy. Shoe buckles became general in the reign of Queen Anne, and displaced the ribbon rosettes formerly worn. Planché accurately describes the fashions of that day.

"The square-cut coat was stiffened with wires and buckram, and the long-flapped waistcoat with pockets almost met the stockings. There were hanging cuffs with lace ruffles, square toed shoes with red heels, and hats laced with gold or silver galloon."

At the beginning of the 19th century many important changes took place. Excepting for Court dress, cloth was substituted for velvet and other rich fabrics. The coat was open, displaying an elaborate shirt-front, stock and flowered waistcoat; and the skirt, though full, fell in natural folds. Trousers were very tight, and held in place by a strap beneath the foot, and hats displayed narrow curved brims.

We have only to cast our eyes down the vista of ages to find that British costume has been suited to the needs, habits, and customs, of the people, and periods at which it was worn. Skins of animals were appropriate to the hardy cave dwellers who inhabited this country at an early period in the world's history. The simple dress of the Anglo-Saxons fulfilled the requirements of a primitive race; and the furs and rich fabrics brought home by the Crusaders were adapted to the higher state of civilisation which prevailed in the Middle Ages. In the 16th century the Renaissance (of art and culture) was specially noted for richness of attire. During the 18th century a mixture of styles which had found favour with previous generations was the most marked feature in the costume of that period, and this equally applies to the two first decades of the present one. Masculine attire at the *fin de siècle*, though simple and practical, has few points of beauty to recommend it. Briefly, it resolves itself into a series of woollen cylinders which changeth not from generation to generation.



WALKING DRESS, 1830

the laundress a cuff upon which an admirer had written an offer of marriage (which by-the-bye afterwards played an important part in a breach of promise action), and again this overmastering emotion prompted an elderly and well-known woman in the fashionable world to leave instructions that her love letters should be buried with her. Matter of fact, up-to-date people try to make us believe that sentiment and romance are things of the past, but we only have to look a little below the surface to find it flourishing like a green bay tree, and in the most unexpected places.

Is there a woman among us, whatever her degree, who has not hidden away among her most cherished possessions treasures of no intrinsic value, yet which to her are absolutely priceless? A photograph, a lock of hair, a few faded flowers, or a bundle of love letters tied up with the conventional blue ribbon, may in the years to come cause inconvenient questions to be asked by the worthy, respected and natural protector for whom a sincere regard is felt, but who is of necessity denied that passionate love which comes but once in a lifetime. Yet where is the daughter of Eve to be found who can be cajoled or persuaded to part with emblems associated with sweet memories of the past? We justify such actions to our own satisfaction and run the most terrible risks rather than destroy them.

It is this feeling which prompts newly-engaged couples to be photographed hand-in-hand, and gazing rapturously into each other's eyes, supremely unconscious, so long as the glamour lasts, that they are objects of ridicule to the world at large. Brides are particularly prone to sentiment, or they would never preserve their wedding-dress in silver paper as something too sacred to be looked upon, their bouquet (resembling nothing so much as a bunch of flavouring herbs) under a glass shade, or the sugar pagoda which adorned the cake at their nuptials.

It is sentiment which causes mothers to keep their children's toys long after the users thereof have ceased to regard them, and urges such women to extend their sympathies to those who are orphans or worse, and to shield them from pain or sorrow; for motherhood arouses the holiest and tenderest instincts of our nature.

Sentiment makes those well on in years

SENTIMENT

is generally regarded as a purely feminine instinct, but occasionally men develop a quality which, if not identical, closely resembles it. Age has little influence upon this mental tendency, for the purest sentiment is displayed by a child for her first doll; the same disposition of mind recently made a woman keep back from

visit the home of their childhood after long absence, to wander through the rooms of the old house where they were born, for such spots are endeared to us for the sake of Auld Lang Syne, and more precious than any later home be it ever so grand.

Our cemeteries are lasting monuments to sentiment. Among the wealthy it displays itself in costly tombstones, and those less well endowed with this world's goods deny themselves to wreath the last resting-place of their dead, with flowers.

FASHIONS AND FRIPPERIES.

Revolt appears to be the watchword just now of the weaker sex, and women run the risk of losing all the rights they have in a vain desire after the unattainable. There are revolts of "new women," of daughters, of domestic servants, of female factory hands, of post-office clerks, of fair girl graduates, and even of school children. When is it to end? If our sisters, our mothers, and our aunts find it absolutely essential to have a safety valve for their superfluous energy, why do they not organise a crusade against the preventible ugliness which surrounds them? We seem to have left all canons of art and beauty in the background, and to have forgotten the lessons in good taste which were so carefully impressed upon us a few years since by the Wilde Brotherhood. Notwithstanding the scathing ridicule which was remorselessly hurled at the worshippers of the sunflower and the lily, they fought bravely for beauty of form, for artistic colouring, and for a refinement which approached the ideal. Now these qualifications are as extinct as the dodo. In our homes, in our dress, and in the thousand and one things which form our daily life, we find them not. Manufacturers with an insane desire for novelty repeat *ad nauseum* patterns in textile fabrics, which were ugly enough when first introduced, early in the Victorian era, and are doubly so now when botanical effects are magnified to three times their natural size—a fault which equally applies to wall-papers. Stiffly-starched white curtains are again in the ascendant, white-washed ceilings have once more asserted themselves, and

no one seems to regret the lovely designs for household decoration, which we owed to the combined efforts of such a trio of art lovers as William Morris, Walter Crane, and Lewis Day. Our houses are rectangular boxes divided into compartments to facilitate the processes of eating and sleeping, and the contents thereof are hardly constructed on hygienic lines. A little care and forethought would convert our dwellings into shrines of beauty. Our streets might be improved by planting avenues of trees, and each householder could add his quota by covering bare walls with evergreen creepers and by embellishing his windows with flower-boxes. The larger railway stations afford endless opportunities for improvement, neither can the Metropolitan line, with its sulphurous caverns at intervals, be regarded as absolutely perfect. Other modes of transit, omnibuses to wit, might be so arranged that persons of average build could pass from one end to the other without dismembering those of their fellow creatures who have already taken their places, while each individual should be ensured a fair allowance of space by dividing the seats into compartments as is sometimes done in the pits of theatres by a narrow iron bar. Neither is the London Gondola altogether faultless. Though better horsed and manned than the miserable growler, one is asphyxiated if the window (the only means of ventilation) is closed; or exposed to all the fury of the elements if it is open. In clothing our bodies all individuality is denied to us, we are the victims of circumstances, and

modistes are allowed, without a protest, to dress us in styles which contort every line of the human form, and would not be tolerated for a moment but for that want of originality so characteristic of the Saxon race, and the passivity which causes the majority to follow the lead of those who are working for their own ends.

If it were otherwise should we content ourselves with millinery which is, indeed fearfully and wonderfully made, composed as it is of pyramidal edifices piled up with flowers which have no prototypes in Nature, and would puzzle the most scientific botanist to classify. May the vendors thereof be forgiven when they rival Ananias and Sapphira in perverting the truth, and when, by flattering our vanity, they seek to exchange



SPRING HOUSE DRESS

some hideous model direct from Paris for the current coin of the realm.

To our artist I am indebted for two charming gowns for spring wear. The house dress is a harmony in grey, but could, of course, be carried out in any other colour. The bodice, sleeves and plain skirt made with the fashionable organ pleats, are of Amazon cloth, and the full vest is of silk of exactly the same tint. The latter is edged with narrow bands of chinchilla, terminating with ornaments of oxydized silver. The waistband is also of this metal, which appears again on the collar.

The visiting costume, which would be equally appropriate for private views, *matinées*, or other smart social gatherings, has an underskirt and vest of dark green velvet embroidered with black silk in a raised pattern. Cloth of the same colour is used for the remainder of the gown, which is similarly trimmed, and edged with a narrow band of silver fox. A very dainty *chapeau* of green velvet has a black jet ornament and ostrich tips. Skirts are now worn of considerable width, though the principal fulness is confined to the back breadths, and much diversity is shown in the arrangement of bodices into which two and sometimes three different fabrics are introduced. For the first warm days of Spring some fascinating shoulder capes of coloured cloth and satin have been prepared, which are often *appliquéd* to show the lining of a contrasting shade.



The Ludgate Children's Bond of Union has been instituted for the purpose of encouraging the young sons and daughters of our readers to take a lively and active interest in the welfare of their poorer neighbours, and



VISITING COSTUME

to stimulate them to co-operate in various forms of useful work.

RULES.

1. Boys and girls desirous to become members of the Ludgate Children's Bond of Union must be under seventeen years of age.
2. Each application for membership to be accompanied by a letter stating the age last birthday; to contain the coupon cut from this Magazine, and a postal order for one shilling.
3. All communications for "Florence" to be written on one side of the paper only, and a coupon to be enclosed. Parcels to be prepaid and addressed to her at the office of this Magazine, Temple House, Temple Avenue, London, E.C.
4. Put name and number of member above the address on the first page of each letter to save confusion, as there may be several members of the same name.

DEAR CHILDREN,—

We go to press for the April issue of this Magazine before the March number reaches you, so I am compelled to write my second letter before you have had an opportunity of replying to the first one. I trust, however, by the time you receive this you will have well

considered the proposals I made to you last month, and that I shall have a great many new friends among those of our young readers who have been enrolled as members of the "Ludgate Children's Bond of Union." The severity of the past winter has caused more than the usual amount of sickness and suffering, and influenza has claimed many victims among the working-classes in the East-end of London. In many homes father or mother, sometimes both, have been taken; while in others the children have been stricken, and can make but a poor recovery in such miserable surroundings as they are obliged to endure. It is for such little ones that I am most desirous you should work, and recollect that every garment that is made, and every shilling I receive from a new member will provide fresh air and comforts for children of your own age, but who have been debarred all their lives from the comforts you enjoy. So do try in every way to persuade your young friends to help on this good work, and in my monthly letters to you I shall be able to tell you a little of the histories of the children you are befriending, which will make you take a real and personal interest in them, I am sure. Do not forget that the Editor has promised to give a prize of one guinea each month to the boy or girl who has secured during the preceding month the largest number of new members for the "Ludgate Children's Bond of Union," besides others, of which due notice will be given; and that the photograph of this prize-winner will be published in the "Children's Realm." I am also anxiously looking for the photographs of as many of you children as possible, to put into that large album I spoke to you about, and for the articles of clothing which are intended to form part of the outfits of the little waifs and strays whom you have taken under your protection. The first consignment of these garments should be sent to me, carriage paid, to the office of THE LUDGATE ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE by April 20th. For all particulars concerning the working of the "Ludgate Children's Bond of Union," its objects, and the items of clothing which will be most acceptable, I must refer you to my letter in the March number, which can be obtained through any newsagent, or direct from the office, for 8½d.

Now, dear children, let me once more remind you how pleased I shall be to advise you on any questions of general interest, and to help you in the difficulties that even the happiest children encounter, so write fully and freely to

Your sincere and affectionate friend,

FLORENCE.

RECITATION.

THE LOST DOLL

I once had a sweet little doll, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world;
Her cheeks were so red and so white, dears,
And her hair was so charmingly curled

But I lost my dear little doll, dears,
As I played on the heath one day,
And I cried for her more than a week, dears,
But I never could find where she lay.

I found my dear little doll, dears,
As I played on the heath one day;
Folks say she is terribly changed, dears,
And her paint is all washed away.

And her arm trodden off by the cows, dears,
And her hair not the least bit curled,
But for old sake's sake she is still, dears,
The prettiest doll in the world.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

A CHAT ABOUT DOLLS.

Every little girl has her cherished dolly and many have quite a family of them in whom they take the greatest interest and whose wardrobes are a constant source of anxiety. For every good little mother is anxious that her children should be a credit to her, and does her best to make them obedient and act as well trained dolls ought to do. I know, therefore, it will please you to hear about dolls which have been the playthings of little people who live in countries far distant from England, and of the ancient Greek, Roman and Egyptian dolls which were made thousands of years ago. Some of these may occasionally be seen in different museums. The young Romans had beautifully carved ivory dolls and also little earthenware images, of which no doubt they were just as fond as you are of your beautiful waxen dollies of to-day. Those belonging to the children of Greece were jointed much as the wooden Dutch dolls are now, and were generally made of terra-cotta or baked clay. Those for the Egyptians were of wood or porcelain and were so much prized that when a little child passed over to the happy spirit land, she took her dollies with her, for they were more beloved than any of her other toys. But Japan is the paradise of dolls, and many feasts are held in their honour. Each household has quite a large collection, and every mother presents her little daughter with a new doll on the third day of the third month of the year. As these are never destroyed, at last it becomes necessary to provide a special room for them, particularly when there are several girls in a family. They

are always beautifully dressed in the fashion of the country. They have tiny services of household utensils, and miniature suites of furniture, of bamboo and lacwork; indeed, everything that the most exacting dolls can require. In this happy land boys also have their festival, on the fifth day of the fifth month of the year. Early in the morning their hair is cut, and they are dressed in their best clothes to offer prayers in the temples, after which they are allowed to devote the day to merriment. Whenever a boy is born his parents float over the house a large fish called a *taio*, which resembles our salmon and leaps waterfalls undaunted by many failures. For this reason, and to encourage boys to cultivate perseverance, it is chosen as their emblem. Among the favourite toys of Japanese boys are facsimiles of the *taio*, for the reason given, the lion, the king of animals, and the peony, the king of flowers. Even the children of savages must have something to love and to fondle. Travellers tell us that their playthings often consist of such trifles as an ear of corn, a deftly-twisted leaf of some tropical plant, or even a cucumber or gourd, which the little ones croon over and caress, while they tell them stories just as you do. Long years ago Anglo-Saxon mothers used to make rag dolls for their children. These had the hair and face painted, and were dressed in the ordinary manner. Later wooden dolls were sent to this country from the Netherlands, and were known as Flanders babies. They had round, black eyes, a deep blush painted on each cheek, and carefully arranged brown wigs. Large numbers of dolls are made in England and America, and others come from Germany, where whole families are employed in their manufacture. Women cut out and sew the doll's calico body, little children fill these with saw-dust or bran, and the most skilful labourers are chosen for fixing the hair and eyes and for painting the delicate wax complexion. The more expensive kinds are made with mechanical contrivances, so as to allow the doll to walk, talk, or even write little notes on a slate. I do not know, however, that these afford more pleasure than the ordinary wax, wooden, or china doll, which can be bought for a few pence and is not too grand to use. Girls should learn to make and wash their own dolls-clothes, as by doing so they will acquire many useful lessons which will help them when they have to perform this office for

their younger brothers and sisters; and in the good time to come, for real babies of their own. Many grown up people look back with pleasure to the time when they were young enough to enjoy the society of their mute playmates.

Her Majesty the Queen, who has long been a great-grandmother, has still at Windsor Castle one hundred and thirty-two dolls, thirty-two of which she dressed herself. She played with them till she was fourteen years old, and doubtless they are a source of the greatest interest to her grandchildren.

* * *

I WONDER how many people there are who are yearly overcharged and wrongly charged income-tax. Many do not even know that if their annual incomes are below £150 they are entirely exempt from paying income-tax. If we consider a moment we may soon see how a vast amount of income-tax is yearly collected wrongfully, if not illegally. In most of these cases, too, the tax is deducted from those least able to afford it. Small tradesmen, clerks, domestic servants, from the cook to the house-keeper, during years of hard work invest their savings from time to time in low-priced but safe securities, the interest on which they rely to keep them when too old to work. Many widows and spinsters come under the same category. In the majority of the cases I am referring to, the interest on their small investments brings them in, perhaps, something between £50 or £100 a year, so that the income-tax collector has no claim against them legally. But in many cases he gets it and keeps, for when the dividends are paid income-tax is deducted. True it can be claimed and obtained back from the Income-tax Office if you go about it in the right way and do not consider the waste of time which is incurred. The result more frequently being disgust and loss of temper, and so the attempt is dropped. This grievance—and it is a real grievance—has been taken in hand by "The Rate and Taxpayers' Protection Association," of 10, Serjeant's Inn, Fleet Street, E.C., who issue a handy little book on "Income-tax: To Pay or Not?" price 6d., which I strongly advise everyone to get. The information it contains seems applicable to most businesses—auctioneers, brewers, hotel-keepers, clergymen, doctors, licensed victuallers, and others may find on perusing it many valuable hints worth many times the cost of the book.



SPRING

A burn flashed
from a rugged height
Wildly, wildly glancing;
The wind of the winter night
Kept time to the tune
of its dancing

A flush, a glow
on the wintry skies
Earth smiles in her happy
waking

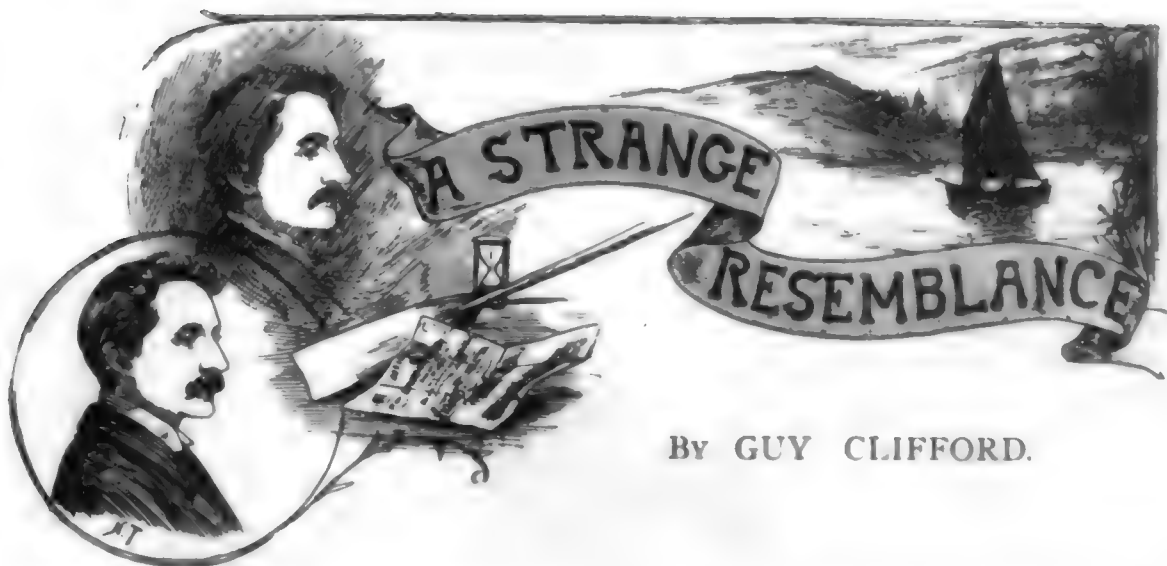
Whispers the wind
Arise! Arise!

The dawn of Spring
is breaking

Bright eyes look
on the waters there

And the songs of the birds
ring clearly

The Spring is here!
The Spring is here!
And we love, we love it dearly



BY GUY CLIFFORD.

“**G**RACEMAN & CO.” Such was the title which adorned the brass plate on the door of one of the old-fashioned houses in Fig Buildings, Temple. Fig Buildings is approached from the Strand down a narrow alley, barely wide enough to permit a hansom to slowly pick its way, and with so small a margin of foot pavement for the pedestrian that it was more convenient to keep to the roadway so as to avoid chafing the skin off one's elbows in the endeavour to walk along the apology of a path.

As everyone knows, the Temple is the abode of barristers and solicitors, and although the brass plate gave no indication of the business of Graceman and Co., the Law List, if consulted, would have informed any enquirer that the firm were solicitors of many years standing.

Robert Graceman, the senior partner of the firm at the time I am writing, had succeeded to the position of head of the firm on the death of his father some years before, and there had always been a Graceman at the head of affairs for four generations. The Company consisted of myself, Francis Halton. I was a nephew of the old man, and had entered the firm on the same day that I donned a tail coat for the first time, and some time after passing my final examination old James Graceman called me into his room, and without much prelude, informed me that he was about to give up the management of the business to his son, and that he wished to make me a junior partner in the firm.

Robert Graceman and myself were both bachelors, and had for many years lived in chambers over the offices, where we had a most comfortable suite of rooms common to both of us. In appearance Robert Graceman was the exact antithesis to the ordinary City man. His broad, full forehead, full grey eye, and florid, clean-shaven face, reminded one more of the typical country squire, his great breadth of shoulder, and well set up, massive frame, still more enhancing that resemblance.

After the death of his father, Robert—who had never taken much interest in the details of the business—occupied himself more and more in his favourite studies, chemistry and electricity, and consequently I saw but little of him during office hours. But on emergencies and in intricate matters I was always sure of his help, and in these pages I shall set down a few of the most interesting cases which he helped me to unravel.

One evening in the early part of June, just as the last clerk was preparing to close up for the day, one of the firm's oldest clients rushed into my room breathless and without ceremony. “So glad to catch you, Halton,” he gasped, as he threw himself into a chair, and commenced to mop his brow. John Wilton was the

manager of the City and Provincial Life Assurance Co., one of the best offices in the City of London, and our business relations with his Company were of considerable extent.

When he had somewhat regained his breath he told me in a few hurried words what had brought him to our office at such a late hour, and his story was so remarkable that I requested him to come upstairs to our private rooms and relate the whole matter to Robert Graceman.

We found Robert sitting quietly with outstretched legs gazing contemplatively into the bright and cheerful fire. He rose as we entered, and shaking hands with Mr. Wilton, drew another chair up to the fireplace, and waving his hand towards it, said:—

"Sit down, Wilton, and tell us what we can do for you."

"I am afraid it's impossible for even you to do anything to help us,"

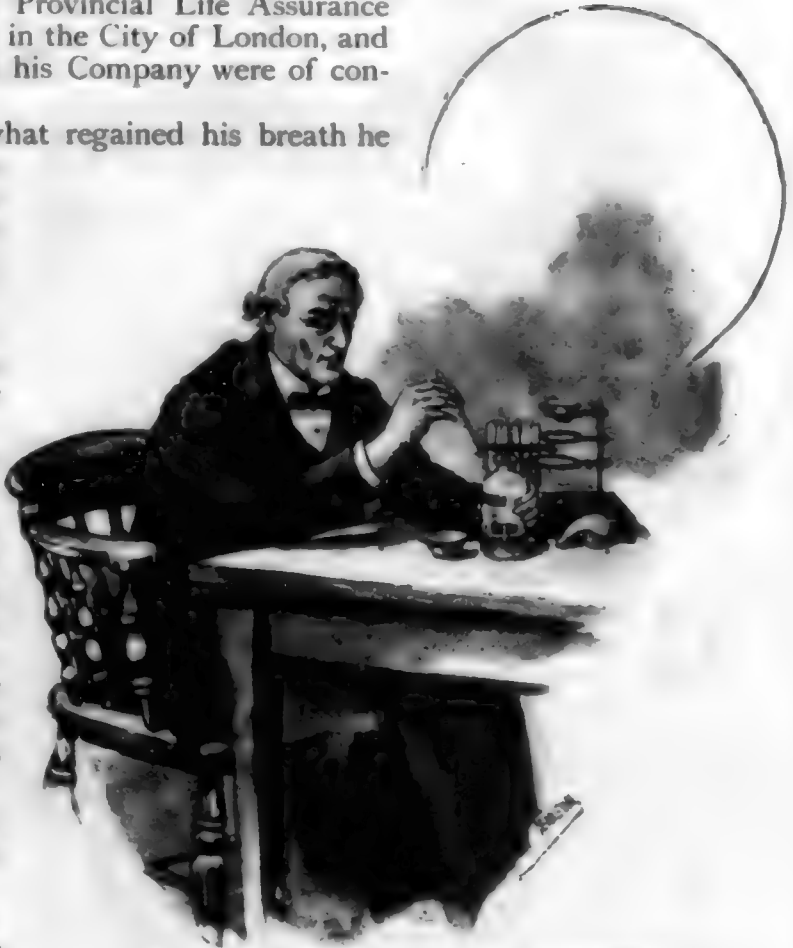
replied Wilton. "You will, I am afraid, consider the whole thing a fantasy, a fiction of the imagination; but on my word of honour I cannot rest until I have unburdened myself to you. First of all I have seen a ghost or a spirit, and have not only seen it, but heard it talk; but I will give you the whole story from the commencement as concisely as possible.

"Just two months ago a young man named Wilfred Harley, of decent family, came to us in the ordinary way of business, to insure his life for £10,000. The usual preliminaries were gone through, the Doctor's certificate was perfectly satisfactory, and within a fortnight the first year's premium was paid and the policy was issued.

"Exactly a week after the delivery of the policy we received a notice from Trelawney and Sons, a firm of solicitors at Weyford, in Cornwall, informing us that William Harley had been drowned in the River Shannon by the capsizing of his boat, and claiming the £10,000 assured for the benefit of the next-of-kin, Henry Harley, a brother of the drowned man. The letter was accompanied by a report of the coroner's inquest, and a doctor's certificate of the death.

"As the sum was a large one and the loss to the office so great, we sent one of our staff to make a private inquiry on the death, but everything appeared to be strictly in accordance with the coroner's report, so there was nothing to do but to pay the money over, which we did.

"This evening I was intending to work an hour or two later than usual at the office, and went out about five o'clock to obtain a cup of tea, and was on my way back about twenty minutes later when a few yards from the place where I had just had my tea, standing right in the full blaze of light outside a silversmith's window,



"ROBERT GRACEMAN OCCUPIED HIMSELF IN CHEMISTRY."

I saw the very man whom we had assured, and who was considered to be dead. He was talking to another man who had his back towards me. I was so thunder-struck for the moment that I completely lost any common-sense I may be endowed with, and continued my course for some few seconds. Then, as the whole situation flashed across me, I turned back to question the man, but my resolve came too late, for he was gone, and although I walked rapidly down the street for several hundred yards, scrutinising every man I passed, I failed to find him. Hurrying back to the office I told my clerks I had altered my mind, and, calling a hansom I drove straight on to you. Of course," continued Mr. Wilton, "you will most probably consider I have been misled by a chance resemblance, but I assure you that I feel absolutely certain that the man I saw to-night is the same man we insured two months ago." As Wilton finished speaking he rose from his chair and paced nervously up and down the room.

"You want us to look into this matter, I suppose," said Robert Graceman after a few moments' silence, "and the first question that confronts us is, who is the man that was drowned, if your man is still alive? We have the coroner's report that the drowned man was Wilfred Harley; I see that the report gives several credible witnesses as to the identity of the deceased man, among whom is Trelawney, the solicitor who wrote you on behalf of the next-of-kin, who is stated in the report as being the family solicitor, and whom I know personally to be a man of the highest integrity; then there is the brother, Henry Harley, and an old servant of the family, Susan Hammond, who both prove the identification of the body. This evidence appears to be absolutely conclusive on that point."

"You said you made enquiries as to the death, before you paid the insurance money over. Perhaps you will tell us the result of your investigation and also the whole of the facts leading up to the accident which ended so fatally for this young man, which are given but briefly in the coroner's report."

"And as dinner is just ready," I added, "let us postpone the narrative till afterwards, when we can discuss the matter at our leisure."

"That's a capital idea, Halton," said Graceman, and turning to Mr. Wilton he continued with a chuckle, "You've no idea what a zealous trencherman Halton is; 'pon my word I believe I should be half starved if it was not for him. He routs me out from my den when I am deep in some most interesting experiment and hauls me off to feed whether I will or not."

So we adjourned the sitting for the dinner table, and Graceman tabooed the matter which was uppermost in our minds, keeping us in roars of laughter during the whole meal by his humorous and sparkling conversation.

When we had lighted our cigars



"THE VERY MAN"

Graceman, resuming his thoughtful air, desired Mr. Wilton to begin at the commencement and relate all he knew.

"I have told you how we came to insure the man, and then received notice of his death," began Mr. Wilton. "The loss was so unexpected," he went on, "that it necessitated most careful corroboration, and I despatched one of our most trusted inspectors to see that everything was straight and above board.

"It seems that the two brothers, Wilfred and Henry Harley had gone to a little village called Ballymath, near Athlone, on the Shannon, in Westmeath,



"THE BOAT WENT OVER"

Ireland, for a week's holiday, shooting and fishing, and on the day of the accident they went up the River Shannon trout fishing, having engaged a boat with a man to row them. They were returning to Ballymath when the accident happened.

"It was about six o'clock in the evening when they were about half a mile from home; they had the sail up and a sudden gust of wind coming down the gorge between two hills caught the canvas, and before they could do anything the boat was on her beam ends and they were all in the water. Henry Harley was but a poor swimmer and was fortunate enough to clutch one of the oars as the boat went over; the boatman could not swim at all, but he also saved himself by hanging on

to the gunnel of the boat, whilst Wilfred Harley, who was reported to be a first-rate swimmer, never appeared after the boat capsized. It is supposed that he was rendered insensible by a knock on the head from the mast, anyhow his body was not recovered until the next morning. At the inquest, which was held three days afterwards, the body was identified as you have read and the jury's verdict was 'Accidentally drowned.' Our inspector then went down to Weyford, ostensibly to see the solicitor with regard to our paying the Assurance money, and there ascertained that the two brothers lived together at their paternal home, Harley House; both their parents were dead, but they were in comfortable circumstances although not well off. The dead man appeared to be the favourite with the tenants and neighbours, whilst his brother Henry was considered to be rather fast—partial to horse-racing and fond of cards—but nothing dishonourable was hinted at.

"In appearance, the brothers were represented as bearing a likeness to each other, but Henry was some years the elder and somewhat heavier in build. Our man had a good opportunity of seeing him, as he met him at the lawyer's office, and they had a lengthy conversation together. He seemed much cut up at his brother's death, and showed it both in his manner and appearance. That, I think," concluded Wilton, "is the substance of our inspector's report."

"There was no suggestion of foul play in the capsizing of the boat," suggested Graceman.

"No, the boatman's evidence was perfectly clear on that point," replied Wilton.

"And you still fancy you saw Wilfred Harley to-night."

"It was no fancy, Graceman; I am as sure I saw him standing outside that silversmith's shop to-night as I see you sitting there now."

"Well, well," returned Graceman, "I will turn all you have told me over, and you shall hear from us in a day or two; mind I don't say I can see any solution to the mystery, but, perhaps, I may suggest something. Anyhow, don't say a word about it to anyone in the office, or elsewhere, for the matter of that; and don't worry yourself about the matter either."

"As the affair is now in your hands, Graceman," returned Wilton, "I am quite content to transfer my trouble to your broad shoulders, physically as well as mentally, and now I will take myself off as I know you will be glad to get your thinking-cap on."

When I returned from seeing Wilton out, I found Graceman had resumed his rather inelegant, but comfortable position before the fire, for although it was early in June, it was a damp and chilly night. He looked round as I entered, and said with a smile, "Well, my learned brother in the law, what do you think of our client's case?"

"There's only one opinion possible, as far as I can see," I answered, "Wilton has made a mistake, and caught a glimpse of someone resembling the drowned man; but he certainly appears pretty positive on the resemblance. What do you think?"

"I have not made my mind up yet, and I'm tired and lazy, so I think I shall go to bed, so good-night. By the way, is there anything you want to see me about in the office to-morrow, as I shall probably be out most of the day? I will look into this affair of Wilton's, so you need not bother about it, but I may want your help and counsel presently."

When I got down to breakfast next morning, I found a short note from Graceman, saying he had started earlier than he had intended to do overnight, and that he would very likely not be back that evening, but if he was detained longer he would wire me.

I thought little of his sudden departure, for it was no unusual occurrence for him to be off in this fashion. Sometimes it was a meeting of scientists in some distant town: or, perhaps, the sale of a renowned collection of books on his

hobby, and if he had a case that interested him, he would be away for days together.

That day and night passed, and he did not return, but about two o'clock the next afternoon I received the following telegram from Swindon:—"Wire Wilton to call office this evening at six o'clock, and stay to dinner.—Graceman."

"So he has been after that Harley case after all," I mentally exclaimed, as I wired Wilton to come up to us that evening.

I need scarcely say I was curious as well as anxious to know what the results of his investigation were. He had seemed so little interested that I had not dreamt he had taken up the trail so rapidly, and that he had important news was evident by his wish to see Wilton thus early. I had very little time to speculate on the matter, for I was kept so busily engaged in professional routine during the rest of the afternoon that I had almost forgotten the Harley case, when the clerk announced Mr. Wilton shortly after six o'clock. Closing my desk a few minutes later, we went upstairs to our private rooms, both of us conjecturing where Graceman had been to, when almost following in our footsteps came that individual

himself.

"Hallo, Halton! Got my wire all right? Ah, Wilton, how are you? Excuse me while I have a wash and brush up." And so saying he went off to his room.

"He seems cheerful, at any rate," said Wilton; and then we fell into desultory conversation till Graceman returned.

"Heard the latest news," began

Graceman when he came back; "they've caught that villain that placed the bomb in the Law Courts. I wired Inspector Layman to meet me at Paddington this afternoon when I returned, and we went down to the fellow's nest and took him in bed. I thought he might show a little fight; but he's like the rest of these dastards, and when he found the handcuffs on his wrists he began to pule and cry and offered to peach on his accomplices—but that's another story. We've got three-quarters of an hour before dinner, so I may as well ease your mind, Wilton, on the Harley affair. What do you say when I tell you that I have seen your ghost?"

"By Jove! Have you really though?" exclaimed Wilton.

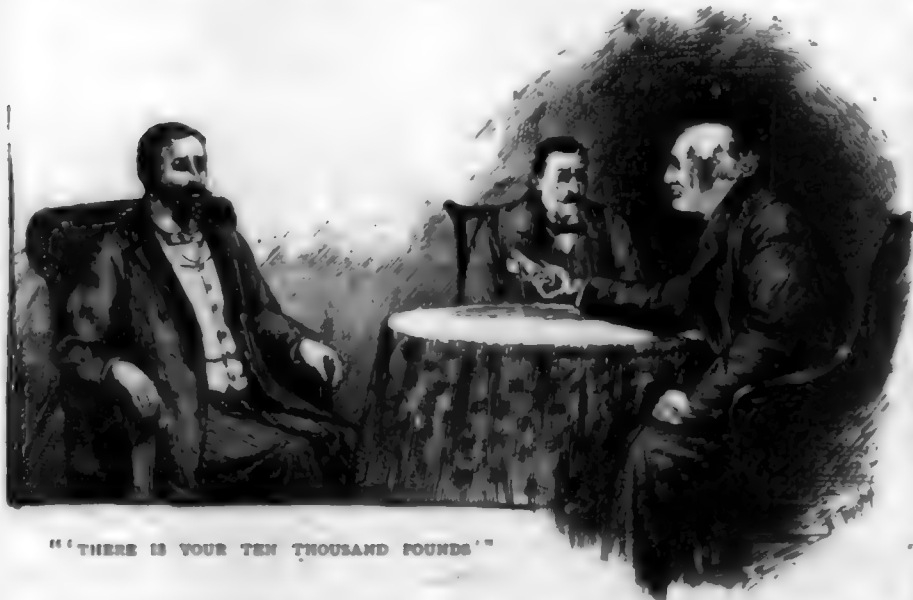
"Yes," replied Graceman, and taking a roll of paper from his pocket he continued, "and there is your ten thousand pounds."

We were both too taken aback to ejaculate a word, but sat staring at Graceman.

"Well, you needn't sit there like two Chinese idols," went on Graceman somewhat irascibly; "can't you use your tongues?"

"My dear fellow, you must remember we are only ordinary mortals; our puny brains are paralysed by your rapidity of action," I replied, while Wilton rose, and shaking Graceman warmly by the hand, said:—

"Robert Graceman, you're a most wonderful man—simply wonderful. When



"THERE IS YOUR TEN THOUSAND POUNDS"

I've quite grasped the fact that these notes are restored, perhaps you will tell us how you got them."

Graceman was evidently pleased by this tribute to his genius, and leaning lazily back in his chair glanced amusedly from one to the other of us.

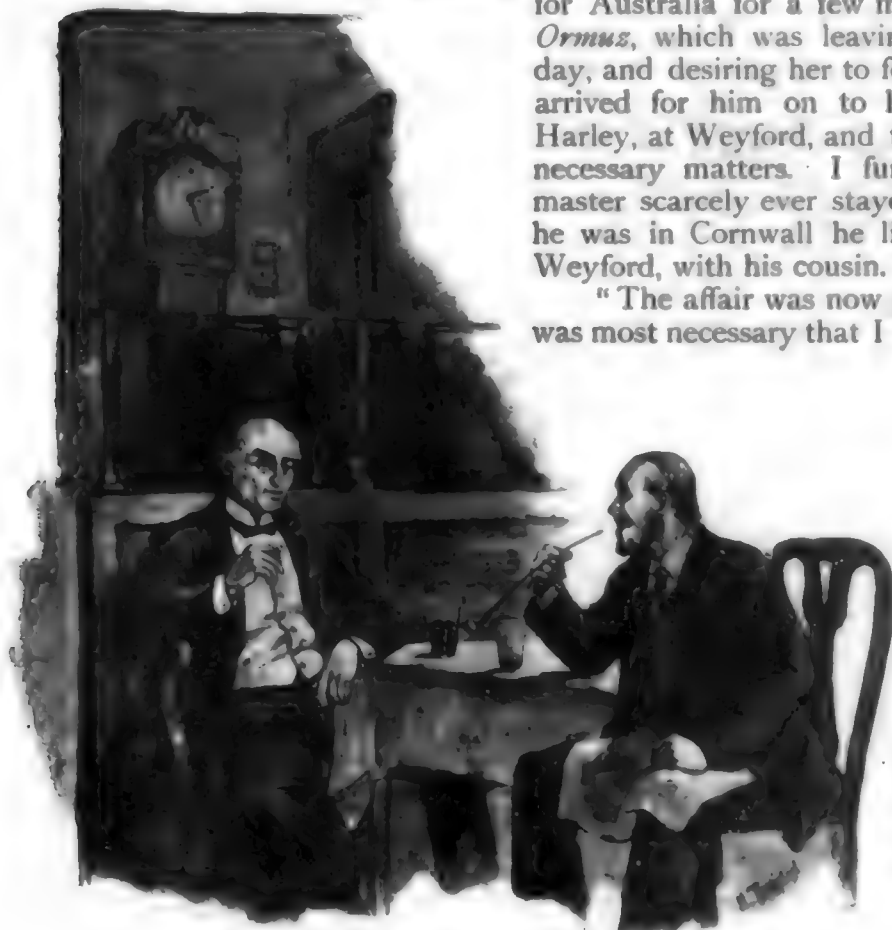
"You appreciate my little effort too highly, Wilton," he answered. "It was not very difficult when the right trail was followed, and if you care to listen you will see it was but a simple affair.

"I started with the assumption that Wilfred Harley was drowned as verified by the coroner's report, and that necessarily the man you saw outside the silversmith's could not therefore be the same man. He was, however, sufficiently his double for you to consider him the identical man that you had insured, *ergo* you had either made a mistake or else the man that you had insured was not the same person as the dead man. The stumbling block was the fact that you had insured a Wilfred Harley who was undoubtedly dead and yet you had just seen him alive. Were there two Wilfred Harleys of the same address? My directory of county families gave Henry and Wilfred Harley, sons of the late Richard Harley, as residing at Harley House, Weyford, Cornwall, but running through the families in the neighbouring towns and villages I discovered another family of Harleys at Trevale, Cornwall, with the important item that there was one son named Wilfred. This was a clue worth following, as I quickly decided, and I caught the early morning train to Liskeard, which was the nearest station, where I arrived shortly after two in the afternoon. I drove over to Trevale and boldly asked for Mr. Wilfred Harley. The old housekeeper, who answered my summons, informed me that he had not been home for nearly two months and that she had only that morning received a letter from him from the Queen's Hotel, London, saying he was leaving England

for Australia for a few months by the steamer *Ormuz*, which was leaving London that same day, and desiring her to forward any letters that arrived for him on to his cousin, Mr. Henry Harley, at Weyford, and to consult him on any necessary matters. I further elicited that her master scarcely ever stayed at Trevale, as when he was in Cornwall he lived at Harley House, Weyford, with his cousin.

"The affair was now getting interesting. It was most necessary that I should see this Wilfred

Harley before he left England, if possible. Fortunately for us the Orient line steamers, to which the *Ormuz* belonged, call at Plymouth on the day after they leave London to take off the latest mails and such passengers as desire to travel by rail to Plymouth instead of going on board in London. I remembered this happy circumstance, and on referring to the advertisement



"WE WHILED AWAY AN HOUR"

columns in *The Telegraph*, which luckily I had thrust into my pocket instead of throwing away, I found the *Ormus* would call at Plymouth late that afternoon.

"Now Plymouth is only an hour's railway journey from Liskeard, but it would be too risky my attempting to go there by train as I might miss the steamer; I therefore took the very unprofessional liberty of using the names of the solicitors who acted for his cousin Henry and drove immediately over to Weyford telegraph office and sent off a wire to the following effect:—

"To Wilfred Harley, Steamer *Ormus*, Plymouth.—Have you insured for £10,000 in City and Provincial office, if so your immediate presence here of most urgent importance, wire reply instanter to Trelawney Sons, Weyford.'

"As I could expect no reply for an hour or so, even if my telegram was so fortunate as to catch the steamer, I bore Halton's motto in mind and devoted the interval to restoring nature's forces by a comfortable feed at the Weyford Arms.

"Lighting a cigar I desired the waiter to ask the landlord to step into me and we whiled away an hour in chatting about the neighbouring residents and their doings. Mr. Henry Harley was still at Harley House, where he was now getting better from a three weeks attack of influenza. The Wilfred Harley, who was now on board the *Ormus*, had spent a couple of days at Harley House just previous to his two cousins, the dead Wilfred and Henry Harley's, departure for Ireland, and he had then gone to Switzerland, so mine host had heard.

"All this was most important to my theory, which I suppose you now see," said Graceman, as he relit his cigar.

"Go on, there's a good fellow," said Wilton excitedly, and Graceman with a smile continued:—

"It was getting on for six o'clock when I bade my talkative host adieu and bent my steps to the office of Trelawney, the solicitors. Sending in my card I was ushered into John Trelawney's room and found both him and his father in excited conversation. John Trelawney held a telegram in one hand, and as we shook hands he exclaimed in his bluff hearty way, "What brings you into Cornwall, Mr. Graceman? You're the very last man I should have expected to drop in, but I'm very glad to see you, man."

"My business," I replied gravely, "will turn out rather unpleasantly I'm afraid. Is that telegram from Plymouth from Wilfred Harley, of Trevalle?"

"How did you guess that?" he returned. "Yes, it is, and be hanged if either father or I can make it out; perhaps you can, as you seem to know about it," he went on, handing me the familiar buff-coloured message, which read as follows:—

"Yes I insured £10,000 last April, wait at office for me, will come immediately by next train, Wilfred Harley.'

"This settled the matter, and as there was no room for doubt I related the whole case to the Trelawneys.

"While we were discussing the pros. and cons. at length, a clerk announced Mr. Wilfred Harley.

"Trelawney undertook to narrate the facts to him, and it then transpired that on his last visit to his cousins he had left the Insurance Policy with Henry Harley and had then gone on the Continent; he heard of his cousin Wilfred's death from Henry, but the letter followed him from place to place, and when he got it several weeks after the accident, he wrote Henry in reply and asked him to meet him in London to spend together his last day in England, but he had got a telegram from his cousin the day before his steamer sailed, saying he was laid up with influenza and couldn't come, and wishing him a happy voyage.

"But what has he done with the money, Trelawney? What did he want it for?' burst out Wilfred.

"Well, he hasn't done anything with the money yet,' replied John Trelawney, 'but to-day he sent us a note to draw the money out of the bank, and send it up to the House to-night as he was going up to London to-morrow, and I was going

to take it up this evening myself. We have the whole amount here,' and saying this, he unlocked the safe and brought out the notes.

"I think we had better hand the notes over to Mr. Graceman," said Trelawney's father, 'as he is acting for the Assurance Company, and it rests with him to take what steps he considers proper with Henry Harley. Give him the notes John,' continued the old man, 'and let me tender our sincerest regrets for our unwitting share in this disgraceful fraud,' said Mr. Trelawney, senior, to me, as his son handed me the notes.

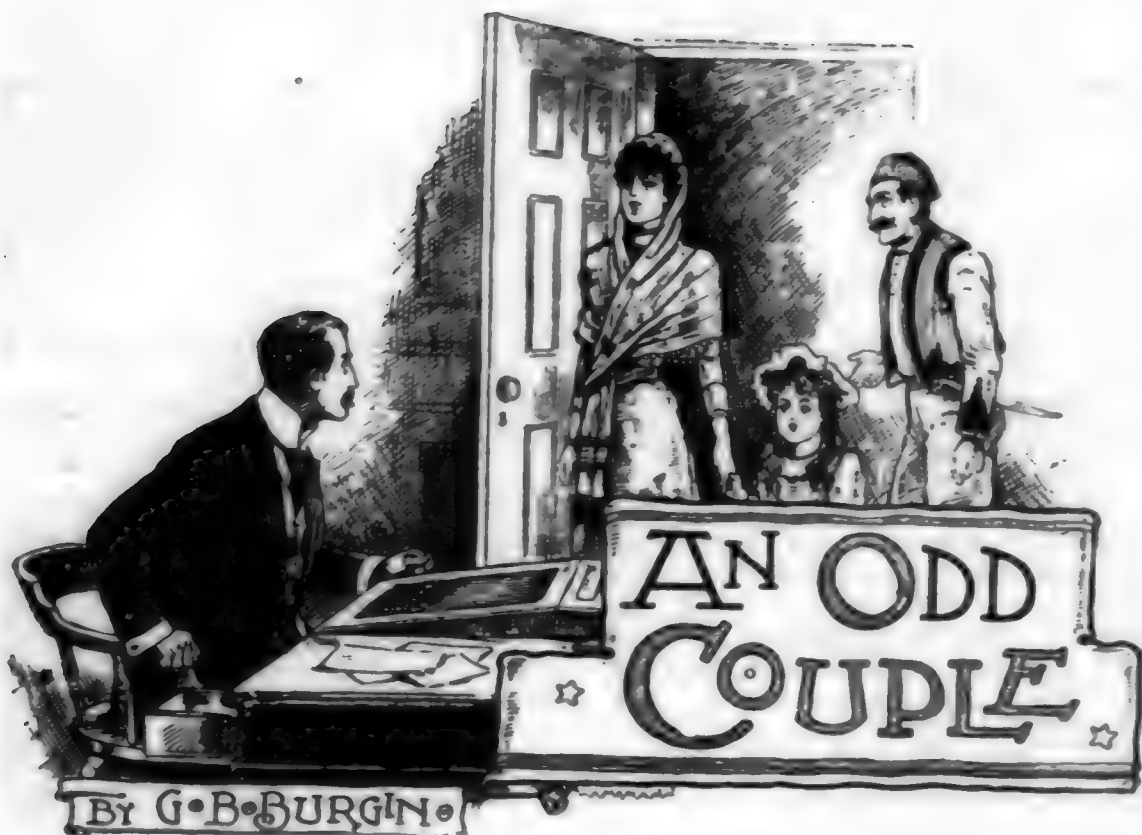
"So it was arranged for all of us to go up to Harley House, and see what Mr. Henry had to say for himself.

"He was in the library when we were announced, and appeared to be in a terribly nervous state. John Trelawney commenced the attack, and he admitted the whole thing right away.

"He was glad, he said, that it was all found out. 'I don't know,' he went on, 'what possessed me to act as I did. The names were the same, and it seemed a large sum to get hold of, and then there was no difficulty in getting it; I handed the policy to Trelawney, and after that, although I would have given anything to get it back, I dared not go to them and confess my shame. Somehow,' he continued, 'I felt it would soon be found out, and it was my intention to go to London to-morrow, and, if my courage did not fail me, to go to the Company and hand them back the money.'

"To cut a long story short we adjourned to the dining-room, and I agreed to do nothing until I had seen you, Wilton; but, between ourselves, I fancy that Henry Harley won't commit another deed of that kind in this world, for unless I am utterly mistaken, he is in a rapid consumption."

And so it turned out as Graceman had said, for less than a month after I saw the announcement of his death in the obituary notices of *The Times*.



ALPHAËUS K. WASHINGTON JACKSON, the United States Consul for Constantinople was not happy. Most men have been in the same position at one time or another, but seldom through the effects of their own benevolence, as in the present instance—a benevolence which appeared to be misplaced. And yet, on carefully considering the circumstances, the United States Consul felt he could not have done anything else. He represented, in his own person, the honour of a great nation; and it was the pride of that nation to succour helpless females in distress. At the same time, the Consul hoped that the Signora would not repeat her visit of yesterday. He was a young man, on the verge of a proposal to a charming English girl, and felt that the sudden appearance of this feminine stormy-petrel would result in something unpleasant. Why couldn't she go to the Italian Consul and pour her woes into his sympathetic bosom? He was paid for that kind of thing. The United States Consul was not paid to be sympathetic to foreigners in distress; he had enough to do in looking after American stray sheep; and yet the lady who had sought his aid the day before, declared

that her own Consul was a macaroni-eating pig, and that she would rather die than appeal to him under any circumstances whatever. The United States Consul did not love the Italian Consul, but he gently pointed out to the Signora Giuletta Annina (that was her picturesque name) how wrong and thoughtless it was to compare the accredited representative of a great nation to an animal whose sole and shameless excuse for existing was the prosaic and involuntary production of breakfast bacon.

"Well, he is a pig for all that," declared "Miss Annina," as the Consul styled her. "He would send me back to Italy to be condemned. And what for? A mere bagatelle."

The Consul, on this particular morning, longed to get away from the dust and dirt and heat of Constantinople, and go up to Therapia, to play tennis with Miss Deyncourt, whilst her somewhat stout mamma chaperoned them discreetly from a distance. But "Miss Annina" had insisted on coming at eleven o'clock in order to acquaint him with the details of the "mere bagatelle." He walked restlessly to the window, looked out upon half-a-

dozen street-curs supinely asleep in the sunshine, and went back to his seat, with a sigh, as the Kavassee, a gorgeous being, with a moustache like a tom cat's, and a whole Woolwich arsenal laboriously bestowed about his person, announced the expected visitor.

"Miss Annina" was a tall, beautiful, flashing-eyed brunette of three or four-and-twenty, with the majestic attitude of a tragedy queen, and the air of an injured goddess. To add to the Consul's embarrassment, she was accompanied by a lovely little girl of five. Mother and daughter both kissed his hand, whereat the Kavassee, in spite of his Oriental impassivity, grinned until the Consul ordered him out of the room. "It won't do to take that fellow up with me to the tennis ground," he thought. "He's sure to let out something about this confounded woman, instead of handing round tea and looking picturesque. All these Turks have a genius for intrigue. Fortunately the Deyncourts don't understand Turkish."

He motioned to the woman to be seated, and remembered, with a thrill of alarm, that she did understand English perfectly. However, it was too late now. The woman had appealed to his honour, chivalry, compassion; and he could not give her up to justice. He knew nothing of the Italian feminine temperament, but it seemed to him that it sadly lacked self-control, and had tempestuous tendencies of a very pronounced kind.

"Now, Miss Annina——" He paused and looked at the child. "Signora, I should say rather."

"Yes," she answered composedly, as the

little one climbed on the Consul's knee and began to play with his watch-chain. "Yes, I did not mention the *bambino* yesterday. I thought you would be more sympathetic if I didn't."

The Consul made a hasty motion to rid himself of the child, but something in the little one's big eyes prevented him from doing so. He rang the bell and ordered the Kavassee to bring a box of Turkish delight. It seemed to him, as he did so, that the Kavassee's moustaches were again elevated in a grin, but the matter was now past helping.

The child took the sweetmeat daintily, and insisted on sharing it with him, gravely putting great sticky lumps into his mouth, and watching with quaint interest the flour on them smear the Consul's moustache. The Signora sipped coffee *à la Turque*, and intimated a desire for cigarettes before commencing to recite her woes. She coiled herself up in a picturesque attitude on a divan in a corner of the room; the Consul sat, child on knee, in his official chair. He could not help thinking that they made quite a family party. He was new to the East

and its ways, fresh to diplomacy, unacquainted with men and women of sultry climes; but, in spite of his lack of knowledge, there hung over him a sense of impending misfortune. There was the inexorability of a Greek tragedy in the classic countenance of this handsome woman. Probably she carried a stiletto in her bosom wherewith to protect herself.

The Signora gave three or four dainty whiffs of her cigarette, and threw it aside. On counting the



INSISTED ON SHARING IT WITH HIM

stumps after her departure, the Consul discovered that she had spoilt thirty. He was an economical though generous man, and it annoyed him to think that if she must smoke at all, she should do so in such a wasteful and extravagant fashion.

When the Signora had finished her coffee, the Consul intimated that his boat for Therapia would start in an hour, and that he would like to get to business.

"Patience," said the Signora, significantly tapping her bosom. "Patience, and business will take care of itself."

"But my dear madam, time —"

"Oh," said the Signora petulantly, "if we are trespassing upon your time, we will go and give ourselves up. Come, little one."

"You misunderstand me," the Consul replied. "I have an appointment in an hour; that is all. Let me know how I can help you."

The child gravely put another piece of Turkish delight into the Consul's mouth. The Consul was of a bilious temperament and knew that it would make him sick, but the little girl held him with her solemn eye, and he dare not refuse the proffered *bonne bouche*.

"I had a quarrel with *mio marito* and stabbed him," said the Signora languidly, as if it were too customary a thing in her social circle to be worth making a fuss about. "We live at Livorno, and, as a cargo-boat was just starting for Constantinople, I managed to conceal myself and the child on board. But the captain was a thief, and stole all our money. I dare not write home for more until my relatives have arranged matters a little with my husband's friends."

"And why did you indulge in so—so extreme a step?" faltered the Consul.

"I fancied there was a rival," said the Signora significantly, "so one night I taunted him about her. He struck me, and I plunged my stiletto between his ribs. Like this! See!"

With a swift movement, the woman sprang up, drew a gleaming stiletto from her bosom, and leaped at the Consul, who mechanically interposed the child between them. The Signora, with gleaming eyes, parted lips, and heaving bosom, looked like an avenging goddess. Then the stiletto fell from her hand, large tears splashed down her cheeks, she threw herself face forward on the divan with a cry of "Carlo! Carlo! *Mio marito!* My poor Carlo!" and wept in torrents.

The child began to cry also, but without uttering a sound. The Consul put her gently down upon the floor, and approached the weeping woman. "Calm yourself," he entreated, moved by her distress. "Calm yourself, Signora. Your husband may not be dead after all."

He took her hand and endeavoured to comfort her. The woman raised her head, impulsively carried the Consul's hands to her lips, and —

"Deyncourt Hanoums Effendi," announced the Kavassee in his customary somewhat limited English.

Mrs. Deyncourt fluttered forward, followed by a tall, beautiful, fair-haired girl. "We thought we would pick you up on our way to Therapia," she began. "Why, Mr. Jackson, what is all this?"

The Consul furtively endeavoured to disentangle his hand from the Signora's fervent clasp, but that lady clung to it with the tenacity of a limpet. "It's— it's an official matter," he stammered. "A—a foreigner in distress."

"Then we will not interrupt you," said Mrs. Deyncourt icily. "Come, Maud," and this embodiment of outraged British propriety nearly tumbled over the child as she turned to leave the room.

Maud stood rooted to the ground. The child offered her a piece of Turkish delight. Miss Deyncourt's scornful glance gave place to a tenderer impulse as she raised the child and kissed its sticky lips. Her look seemed to say to Jackson "Appearances are against you, but I do not believe them." He felt she was a saint, and flashed back the devotion which he had not yet dared to speak. The Signora rushed between them, jealously seized the child, and Maud followed her mother.

"There!" said the Consul in frenzied tones. "There! See what you've done. Ruined me for ever! I shall never dare to ask that young lady to be my wife."

"Then you can marry me," said the Signora composedly; "that is, of course, if your family is noble."

"My father sold peanuts on the cars, my mother was scalped by Indians," said Jackson unvarnishedly. "Before my father died he was a shoeblack."

The Signora hesitated. "After all, birth is only an accident," she mused. "See how the child loves you already. Let us go to Therapia, and explain to this fat old woman and her pale-faced daughter that I will marry you."

"Wild Indians wouldn't make me do it," said Jackson determinedly. "No, not if they were going to scalp me for refusing. You can take a horse to the water, but you can't make him drink."

"Drink! Take a horse to the water!" echoed the Signora scornfully. "I do not want to take a horse to the water, but I will take a mule to Therapia; and we will explain all. What time does the boat start?"

"If you are discovered, all is lost," said Jackson in sepulchral tones.

"Very well," said the Signora composedly. "Then I will be lost—that is all. I do not like that Englishwoman. I will make her apologise for looking at me like that."

"All right," said the Consul in despair. "Your blood be on your own head. I've tried to do you a kindness, and you've ruined my life in return. If you like to come along, I can't prevent you. We

The child, as if sympathising with the Consul's unhappiness, rose from the floor, thrust a sticky hand into his great fist, and looked up at the bewildered American's face. "I entirely agree with you," her manner seemed to imply. "The conduct of this impulsive female, my mamma, is really very reprehensible. But never mind, I'll see you through this. Have some more Turkish delight?"

Jackson was touched by the chivalry of this mute sympathy. "I dare say it will all come right," he said aloud, as if the child had really spoken. "We'll do the



"WHY, MR. JACKSON, WHAT IS ALL THIS?"

shall probably see the Italian Consul up there—I know he's staying at Petala's hotel—and you'll be arrested."

"I can only die once," said the Signora petulantly. She began to weep again. "Oh, Carlo, Carlo. *Mio marito*, you would not see me insulted like this if I hadn't killed you."

"Considering the fact that you have killed him, madam," rejoined the Consul, "I think that last observation of yours is somewhat uncalled for. I've been trying to get you out of a scrape and you're doing your utmost to ruin me."

best we can to explain matters, if it is not too late. What are you grinning at, Hassan?" to the Kavassee, who had glided noiselessly into the room and was making mysterious signs to attract his attention.

A man had followed Hassan. He was a tall, dark, handsome young fellow, but very thin and pale.

The Signora fell into his arms. "*Mio marito!*" she cried, and fainted.

The child toddled gravely over to the new-comer, and tugged at his coat as the young fellow sank down on a divan and fainted away beside his wife.

Jackson, overjoyed at this unlooked-for intercession of Providence on his behalf, dashed about, looking for smelling salts and brandy. He rightly judged the young man to be in a far more serious state than the Signora, and at once poured some brandy down his throat; whereupon the poor fellow opened his eyes, shivered, and sat up.

"Pardon me, Signor," he said apologetically. "Pardon me, but I am still weak from my wound, and it was such a surprise to my dear wife."

"Your dear wife!" ejaculated the Consul. "Why, I thought she murdered you?"

"Pardon me, Signor, if I do not care to discuss my family life with a stranger," the young man said, with an anxious glance at the divan and its fair burden. "I am still too weak to assist. Will you have the goodness to give the Contessa some brandy?"

"Oh, she's a countess now," thought the bewildered Jackson. "I don't like going anywhere near her when she's got that stiletto so handy, but suppose I must risk it."

He cautiously revived the Countess, and once more picked up her child. "Perhaps you can tell me what it all means?" he said to the little one. "You seem to be more friendly than anyone else."

"She cannot speak, alas!—she is dumb," said the Count, turning to the Countess, who kissed him as one risen from the tomb.

"It was merely a scratch," said the Count. "Your stiletto glanced off the rib; but I bled a good deal, and was unable to offer my apologies sooner. It was a fine stroke of yours, my dear, but you need more practice." He turned to Jackson. "If it is any disappointment that I have come to life again, Signor, I shall be happy to cross swords with you."

"Oh, no, you cannot, *mio marito*," said the Countess. "He is not of noble birth; and he has been good to the little one. Give me your ring."

She forced a very handsome cameo from the Count's thin finger. "Accept it, I beg of you, as a memento of your chivalry," she said to Jackson. "When my husband has rested a little, we will accompany you to Therapia, and explain matters to the much too fat English-woman. Come, Carlo. Have you brought my maid?"

"She awaits you at the Hotel Royal, nightingale of my soul," said the Count. "Come, little one."

The child held up her solemn little face to Jackson for a kiss, and obediently trotted away after her parents, still keeping a sticky fragment of the delectable sweetmeat in her podgy little paw.

Jackson gazed after them with mingled feelings of amusement and rage. "Why, she's making him lean on her arm!" he said. "If all Italian women are like that, I don't wonder their own Consul prefers to pass 'em on to someone else. Now, I'll wire up to Mrs. Deyncourt and insist on having this case re-tried. What a blessed thing for me the man wasn't killed outright. I don't like that tumultuous kind of woman for a wife: you might find yourself dead at a moment's notice, and no amount of apologies could straighten things out afterwards. If I'm going to have many more mornings like this, it will turn me grey before my time. Now for the telegram. I'm almost grateful to that foreign fiend, if it's only for the way Maud looked at me when her chilly old mother sent a spasm down my spine. Hassan, come here."

"Did the Effendi call?" asked Hassan obsequiously.

"Bring me a telegraph form; and if I ever catch you grinning at me again when I have visitors it will be the worse for you."

"To hear is to obey, Effendi. May dogs defile my grandfather's grave and my face be turned upside down if I neglect the Effendi's wishes"; and Hassan disappeared, leaving Jackson aghast at the certainty of thus annoying an old gentleman he had never even met."



Incidents OF THE Month

SOCIAL DRAMATIC
MUSICAL & GOSSIP.

DRAMATIC NOTES.

By FITZGERALD ARTHUR.

WE had hardly got rid of the frost when the demon influenza appeared once more, and between the two, the theatres and the music-halls have been having a very bad time. Artists have been stricken down and empty seats have been in many cases the order of the day, or rather night. Mr. Henry Irving was out of the bill for some time at the Lyceum, and the rôle of King Arthur was filled, and filled well, by Mr. Tyars. At the Criterion both Miss Mary Moore and Mr. Charles Wyndham were invalided, and it necessitated the closing of the theatre for a fortnight. Mr. Willie Edouin at the Strand revived "The Babes," with his charming wife, Miss Alice Atherton, in the cast, but the frost killed this also, and this is to be much regretted, as the revival was brought well up-to-date and deservedly merited success. Mr. Weedon Grossmith, for similar reasons, thought it prudent to withdraw "The New Boy." This decision must have been come to somewhat suddenly or the penny-a-liners must have been very much at sea, for I had hardly heard of the notices having gone up at the Vaudeville when I was amused to see several nice little "pars" stating how strong "The New Boy" was running, &c. At the Adelphi the Messrs. Gatti evidently think "The Fatal Card" has been played enough—no doubt frost and influenza have to be also blamed for this—

anyway, it is to be withdrawn at once, before these lines appear in print; but the astute Mr. Fred Lathom is not to be caught napping, and he has another new piece in rehearsal ready to immediately follow this, his first production at the Adelphi. The *Fratelli Gatti* may, and no doubt do, rest assured that their able manager will do justice also to the new production. I heard on excellent authority that one of our West end theatres the other night raised its curtain to exactly nine pounds fifteen shillings, and this, too, where the productions were supposed to be successes.

* * *

Artistic, refined, intellectual, is the unanimous and only verdict possible about "King Arthur." Mr. Comyns Carr has given us a version of King Arthur for which everyone must thank him. In dramatising it he has not allowed himself to be led away for stage effect or dramatic situation, but has put forth all his power and energy in giving us an exquisitely told and scholarly rendered history of the romance of King Arthur. Mr. Irving, for his part, has spared neither labour nor expense in rendering the amplest justice to Mr. Carr's words. He has called to his aid Sir Arthur Sullivan, who has specially composed the choral and incidental music, and Sir Edward Burne-Jones, who has specially designed the scenery and costumes. The

scenery has been entrusted to those masters in scenic art Messrs. Hawes Craven and Harker, and to all this is to be added the wise judgment, experience and the loving solicitude of Mr. Irving himself to render everything as perfect as possible, and the result is that the whole production is the loveliest thing that has ever been placed before the public. The play is divided into a prologue and four acts with five scenes, two scenes being devoted to the last act.

The prologue opens with the scene of the Magic Mere, where is heard the chorus of Lake Spirits. To the banks of this Mere comes Arthur and Merlin, and the latter explains to the King Fate's decrees, and Arthur receives "Excalibur," the magic sword with its scabbard, from the Water Spirits.

"Warrior knight, into thy hand,
Monarch of a mighty land
That, in unborn years, shall be
Monarch of the mightier sea;
Great Pendragon's son, to thee
We shall yield Excalibur."

Act I. shows us the great Hall at Camelot, where the vision of the Holy Grail is seen. Sir Kay, describing, says:—

"Heaven's sign hath come
In miracle and wonder: three nights past—
When all our company were sat at meat—
Above the murmur of the feast there leapt
The crack and cry of thunder, and the roof
Was cloven as with a sword: then down the hall,
Aslant upon a bar of light that gleamed
As though the sun were turned to molden gold,
Passed a white angel, bearing in her hands
The sacred vision of the cup of Christ.

It went as it had come, unseen of all.
Yet while it passed it left, though none knew how,
The witness of its presence in men's eyes:
And, dumbly gazing, each in other found
The stamp of some new glory."

Here the one hundred knights, who have one and all sworn to join themselves in the holy quest, depart upon their self-imposed task. Sir Lancelot, who is very desirous of accompanying them, is dissuaded from his purpose by Guine-



MISS GENEVIEVE WARD

vere at the instigation of Arthur, whose love for Lancelot "was wonderful; passing the love of women."

Act II. brings us to a lovely sylvan dell studded with bushes of white hawthorn in full bloom, where we find the Queen Guinevere surrounded by her maidens. Here some love passages pass between Sir Lancelot and Guinevere. They are watched by Morgan and Mordred, who are conspiring against King Arthur. To further their plot Morgan steals the scabbard from the side of the sleeping king, thinking thereby to weaken his power. Merlin, however, quickly undeceives her when he says:—

MER. Thou hast stolen the
scabbard, but no
mortal hand
Shall take the sword.

MORG. What then? thyself
didst say—

The scabbard's worth doth far outweigh the sword.

MER. To him, but not to thee. 'Tis naught to thee:

Who steals the scabbard doth but draw the sword,
Who holds the sword, holds all save life, and wins,
Though life be spent, a deathless crown from death.

MORG. Whose hand shall take it then, when death draws near?

MER. When those Queens of Night shall steer
Arthur's barge across the mere,
She who long ago did bring
England's sword to England's King,
She shall claim Excalibur!

Act III. finds us in a vaulted chamber opening on to the river. Mordred, who finds his conspiracy ripening, strives to draw Sir Lancelot into it. Lancelot will none of it and would to the King were it not for the fact that Mordred has witnessed his love-making with the Queen. The King enters and informs his Queen of the death of Elaine, and on Arthur telling her of it he says:—

"Thou wouldst have wept
Hadst thou been there when down the vacant stream
That black barge floated, like a speck of night,
Blown on the winds of dawn; and on its deck,
Fallen as a feather from a white dove's wing,



MR. HENRY IRVING
From a photograph by Mayall & Co., Ltd.

Lay this new prize of Death; whose cunning hands
Had wrought in such fair mimicry of life
That on her parted lips there lingered yet
The memory of a smile."

The Queen's perfidy is exposed to the King by Morgan and Mordred, and Lancelot is banished from the Court; just then the news is brought that Caerleon is besieged, and Arthur telling them to use the Queen well, says:—

"The King shall lead thee forth;
My sword is drawn, I want no scabbard now."

On this brilliant scene of Arthur holding high his naked sword, surrounded by all his knights holding theirs also aloft, the curtain falls.

Act IV., Scene I., is the interior of the Queen's prison in the Castle of Camelot, and here comes Sir Mordred telling her Arthur is dead, and that he is King and wishes her to be his Queen, which the Queen indignantly refuses.

Scene II. is once more the great hall of Camelot; Mordred is on the throne, and before it stands Guinevere who, refusing to plead, is condemned by Mordred to be burnt at the stake; he, however, gives her the chance of finding a knight to champion her cause against him. Guinevere pleads in vain, when suddenly Arthur appears as her champion with his helm lowered. On the raising of his helmet, Mordred discovers the King; they fight and Arthur

is wounded, he is, however, revenged for Lancelot kills Mordred. The Queen coming in to thank the knight who championed her cause, discovers the King who, dying, exclaims:

"Far up I hear
The ceaseless beating of Death's restless wings,
And round mine eyes the circling veil of night
Grows deeper as it falls. Henceforth my sword
Rests in its scabbard. What remains is peace."

The stage darkens as his barge is borne to Avalon amidst the chorus of:

"Sleep! oh, sleep! till night outworn
Wakens to the echoing horn
That shall greet thee King new-born,
King that was, and is to be.
And a voice from shore to shore
Cries, 'Arise, and sleep no more,
Greet the dawn, the night is o'er,
England's sword is in the sea!'"

And thus ends this exquisite romance. I have left myself but little space for the performers. Miss Ellen Terry is an ideal Guinevere and Mr. Forbes Robertson has never in all his brilliant career done anything better than his Sir Lancelot, his elocution and declamation being perfect. Miss Genevieve Ward is powerful and tragic as Morgan Le Fay and Mr. Frank Cooper, Miss Lena Ashwell, Miss Annie Hughes, Miss Maud Milton and Mr. Tyars all lend valuable assistance. A special word is due to Mr. Sydney Valentine for his skilful handling of the tricky part of Merlin.

Strange as it may seem, the only disappointment to me was the King Arthur of Mr. Irving. Scholarly, artistic, clever it was, but it was not the King Arthur of our youthful days. It lacked that halo of romance, those mysterious surroundings, that grandeur that will be for ever associated in my mind with the romance of King Arthur.

* * *

"Go-Bang," which was suddenly withdrawn in the height of its success from the Trafalgar, has been on tour for some time now, and is doing great business. The company includes Victor Stephens, Teddy Coleman, and Alice Brooks, and is being managerially piloted about by Mr. John Connors. Mr. Cole, who was in the front of the house when "Go-Bang" was at the Trafalgar, stays in London to look after the syndicate business, and to bank the shekels as they come rolling in from the provinces.

Miss Cissy Graham has been sending round a specially-selected company in the "Gaiety Girl." It included among others Mr. Templar Saxe, Mr. Sam Wilkinson, and Mr. W. E. Gregory, all excellent, the latter particularly so in his song and dance, for which he received repeated encores. Miss Millie Thorne also

was worthy of all praise in that she not only did her little well, but by her acting up to others made her scenes go all the better. Miss Ethel Earle also was exceeding pert and *piquante* as the French maid.

* * *

One Saturday afternoon lately I once more revisited the evergreen "Charlie's Aunt" and found it going stronger than ever, and also playing to good houses. The *matinée* receipts ran well over the three figures; this I can vouch for as absolutely true. It is wonderful the vitality in that old lady. Mr. Penley is as quaint as ever, Mr. Reeves Smith and Mr. Walter Everard as excellent as heretofore. Mr. Sydney Paxton, who is now the Spettigue, seems to have made the part his own, and helps in no small way to carry the piece along. Mr. Seymour is the new "Charlie." I believe three at least have essayed the part since its first production, and Mr. Seymour is undoubtedly the best of the bunch. He plays with an ease and a naturalness that is refreshing. His "Charlie" is, if anything, a better performance than his "Dolly" in "Morocco Bound."

Talking of "Charlie's Aunt" reminds me that Mr. Henry Dana, who has been Mr. Penley's general manager, has severed his connection with the Globe and thrown up the certainty of a comfortable and snug berth for the glorious uncertainty of management. He takes Terry's Theatre and opens at once with "The Passport," by B. C. Stephenson and William Yardley. Here is wishing Mr. Dana every success in his new venture. "It is an ill wind that blows, etc.," and Mr. Dana's departure from the Globe gives his understudy, if I may so term Mr. Gosnay, a most desired and popular promotion. Mr. Gosnay will now carry on Mr. Penley's business in a manner which I have no doubt will meet with the approbation of all parties.

* * *

Mr. J. L. Toole pro-

duced a few weeks back an original comic play by Mr. Ralph R. Lumley, entitled "The Thoroughbred." The piece was pronounced by both press and public to be an unqualified success, but unfortunately Mr. Toole, the very day of the production, was attacked by his old enemy, "the gout," and had at once to relinquish his part. His place was admirably filled by Mr. Westland, who has since worked hard, very hard, to fill such a gap, but there is only one Mr. J. L. Toole and the public will not be put off with a substitute, no matter how good he be.

The plot is simple and funny. A Mr. Rimple, by his own industry and integrity, has amassed a snug little fortune, and his fellow citizens to show their appreciation of his merits have elected him Mayor of Upcomb. His worship has bought some land, and builded himself a house thereon. On this land, and close to his house, stand the ruins of an ancient monastery. These ruins, by the way, somewhat bother the worthy mayor, who is very anxious to repair them or, at least, be allowed to whitewash them, but his advisers prevent him committing any such act of vandalism. Lord Sandacre and family, one with a pedigree

but penniless, live near by, and often bring visitors over to inspect the ruins. His lordship's son falls in love with his worship's daughter. What could be more natural? His lordship's son has a very promising colt entered for a big race, but his lordship finds it is necessary to raise funds by bringing his stable to the hammer. His worship comes to the rescue, and gives the young lordling a cheque wherewith to buy the colt. The price paid for it fairly staggers the mayor who, however, is a dear old boy, and sticks to his bargain. The horse is entered in the mayor's name, and eventually wins the race. In the last act, which gives us a glimpse of the corner of the race-course, the mayor, a low racing



MISS FLORENCE FORDYCE
From a photograph by Frank Dickens



MR. J. L. TOOLE AS PAUL FRY

tout, I believe a Welshman by nationality, and Lord Sandacre's son get into a bit of a mess, and appear on the course disguised as nigger minstrels, and as luck would have it they make a pitch beneath Lord Sandacre's drag, on which, arrayed in all her glory, is Mrs. Rimple, the mayor's wife, and Delia Rimple, the adored one of his lordship's son aforesaid. The complications are numerous and funny. This, briefly, is the plot. An American millionaire, who is anxious at all times to be taken for an Englishman, and who is ready ever to forswear the land of his forefathers, is introduced into the piece. He has several country houses, and it is at his Ascot cottage that all the parties meet. This American is a splendid part, what a mummer would call "a fat part," and Mr. C. M. Loune, who plays it consistently and with great judgment, is indebted to Mr. Lumley for the chance given him, and of which he has availed himself. Miss Henrietta Watson as the Hon. Whilelmina Carlingham, daughter of Lord Sandacre, is out and away the best of the ladies and plays with a great deal of life and spirit. Miss Johnstone as the Mayor's wife is humorous and Miss Fordyce as Delia Rimple

not only looks charming but also plays so as well. Miss Cora Poole is Miss Pallington, but this young lady always seems to me to be bored to death while she is on the stage, and looks as if she wants something or somebody to wake her up, and make her put a little more life and go into her performances.

Mr. Fitzroy Morgan is exceedingly natural as the Hon. Blenkinsopp, and contributes in no small measure to the success of the play. Mr. George Shelton is, as he ever is, no matter what he plays, artistic and thoroughly reliable. Mr. Edward Coventry makes a great deal out of the small and idiotic part of Claude Nizril, a poet. He appears with a blonde wig, a yellow book and a green carnation, and I should advise those young men who belong to the Oscar Wilde school of art, to pay a visit to "The Thoroughbred," and see what abject asses they look, for Mr. Coventry does not exaggerate them one iota. I fear me that Mr. Toole's illness has done much to retard the success of this piece; and it is to be regretted, for it is one of the best and most amusing things Mr. Lumley has done. It is preceded by Barrymore's old farce, "The Secret," which serves its purpose and amuses the early comers, and also affords Mr. George Shelton an opportunity to give us an excellent character study of an old servant.

* * *



MR. GEORGE SHELTON

For some time back one or two photographers have been causing unnecessary trouble to us, and other illustrated journals, by asserting they have the sole copyright of photos produced by them, and although we have successfully defended one action over the copyright of two well-known actors the annoyance still continues.

Some time ago a gentleman in the financial world when under cross-examination in the witness-box said he "did not go into the city to play marbles." Just so! And on the same principle I imagine artistes do *not* go to the trouble of sitting to a photographer for amusement, or for the photographer's sole aggrandisement. Yet, strange as it may appear, some photographers think they do. On the contrary, it is to my mind perfectly clear that it is absolutely imperative in these days of keen competition that an artiste must keep his or her name and appearance before a fickle public, and their motto is:—advertise, Advertise, ADVERTISE! This being so I look to artistes to help

me, and not only me but other illustrated papers, in this matter. There are plenty of good photographers, just as good as these particular ones that I have in my mind while I write, who are ready and willing to photograph artistes. I shall be pleased to furnish names of at least half-a-dozen. We on our side in this paper are ever willing to acknowledge the photographer and to give them a free advertisement by publishing their name beside the reproduction. This I believe is what the law terms "a valuable consideration."

All artistes will best serve this end when they are being photographed, either in character or as ordinary mortals, if they will stipulate that they reserve to themselves the right to give their photos to any paper they may think fit; the photographer being at liberty to print and sell to the public as he does now. In writing this I am actuated by the desire to serve artistes and enable them to obtain those notices which so much delight their hearts and please their friends.

NOTIONS FROM AN EASY CHAIR.

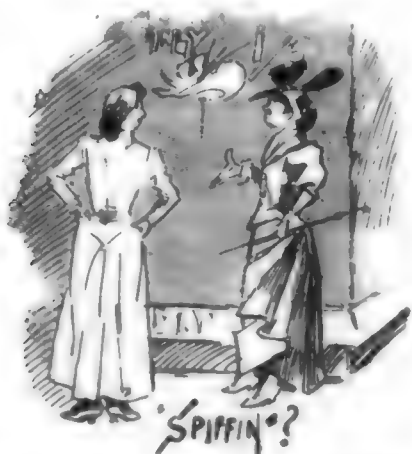
By JOHN A. STEUART.

MR. G. A. SALA, who has seen as much of life as most men, has been venting his disappointment with the present order of things in our sooty, dearly beloved metropolis. When Mr. Sala was a generation younger than he is to-day London must have been, comparatively speaking, a kind of Paradise. Rents were reasonable, and the price of victuals moderate; now the reasonable and the moderate are to be sought in vain. Thirty years ago Mr. Sala had a large house in Guildford Street, Russell Square, which "stood" him in only £90 a year. A little later he moved to a roomy old mansion built by Cubitt (the great Cubitt) in Mecklenburgh Square, and for this spacious residence he paid £135 per annum. But mark the effects of fashion. The world moves; the jerry-builder and the speculator take counsel together how they may fleece mankind, and flats spring into existence. It is not clear why Mr. Sala should have left his Cubitt mansion in Mecklenburgh Square, but he did migrate, and "for the last six years," he wails, "I have been paying £220 a year as the rental of eight unfurnished cupboards on the third floor in Victoria Street, Westminster." The change has given rise to unpleasant reflections, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge is put in evidence as a political economist. Readers of Carlyle's "Life of Sterling" are not likely to

bow before the authority of "the sage of Highgate." But dreamer and opium eater as he was, he had, as the gentleman in the novel says, notions of things, notions of practical things, too. Thinking of the mechanical bent of his age, and the tendency of setting the machine above the man, he gave utterance to this *obiter dictum*, "The wonderful powers of machinery can, by multiplied production, render the *arte facta* of life cheaper; but they cannot cheapen except in a very slight degree the immediate growths of nature or the immediate necessities of man. A coat and a pair of shoes are as dear now as they ever were—perhaps dearer; and no discoveries in machinery can materially alter the relative price of beef and mutton. Now the *arte facta* are sought by the higher classes of Society in a proportion incalculably beyond that in which they are sought by the lower classes; and, therefore, it is that the vast increase of mechanical power has not cheapened life and pleasure to the poor as it has done to the rich. In some respects, no doubt, it has done so, as in giving cotton dresses to maid-servants, and penny gin to all. A pretty benefit truly." As nobody reads Coleridge nowadays, the patrons of THE LUDGATE will forgive me for quoting the passage in full. It will be found in the once famous "Table Talk," and is, I think, included

in a little volume of selections from Coleridge's works, published the other day by Mr. Walter Scott.

Is Coleridge right? Mr. Sala seems to answer in the affirmative. At any rate, he finds what we all find, that while machinery is not only maintaining, but is increasing its vogue, the cost of living does not diminish. In certain directions, indeed, there has been a



decrease. The working man, for example, can now get a new suit for the figure that a second-hand one would have stood him half a century ago. The commoner kinds of boots, too, are cheaper than they were in Coleridge's time, and like servant girls' dress, gaudier and flimsier. Now cheap raiment and foot gear is, undoubtedly, a benefit we owe to machinery. Mr. Sala informs his readers that a shop girl, a "slavey," a dressmaker in a small way, or the daughter of a small tradesman, need not now pay more than 2s. 11d. for a pair of boots, and as for stockings, those half-displayed necessities, she may have them for 3¾d. a pair. A wearable corset (I know not the value of the article), is quoted at 1s. 11d., a full-trimmed hat at a bob, and to use the language of Seven Dials quite a spiffin article is to be had for a bob and a tanner. Silk and calico are also reduced in price, and in a word cheap finery is at the command of man or woman with a few pence in the pocket. Men's hats, likewise, are a marvel of cheapness. The silk hat, the pot hat, the wide-awake,

the Jim Crow, the billycock, the bowler, the "Pork pie"—these are all surprisingly low in price: so that so far as the outer man and woman are concerned things never were in so good a condition as they are now.

But what about the inner man? It is there that Mr. Sala finds cause to lament. Sugar has fallen enormously in price, but Mr. Sala finds no corresponding decline in the price of lollipops, Everton toffee, almond rock, brandy balls, drops of various kinds, or cocoa-nut rock. The same thing obtains regarding the solidier articles of consumption. In Mr. Sala's young days the tariff for leg of mutton was 9d. a pound; beef steak you could have had for 8d., and the best rump steak for 10d., sirloin and ribs of beef being quoted at the same figure. One sighs for those golden days! And not only were the butchers more reasonable in price than they are now, but they seem to have had a nice, gentlemanly consideration for the feelings of their customers. Thus fifty years ago the family butcher would send a sweetbread at Christmas with his dutiful respects. "My present butcher," remarks Mr. Sala, pathetically, "sends me neither sweetbread nor duty." I, too, am a householder, a taxpayer, and, to the best of my lights and ability an upholder of the realm; I patronise my butcher to my utmost capacity, so to speak, but he never patronises me save in rendering his bills promptly. Mr. Sala points out that not only has the Christmas present become obsolete with the butcher, but that he charges more and more for his meat. Rump steak sometimes touches 1s. 6d. a pound, mutton is 11d., and all else in proportion. In the good old days Mr. Sala got a thick mutton chop with a curly



tail for 6d., and a chump chop for 8d., in any decent restaurant. Where to-day will you get a good thick chop with a curly tail for 6d., or a chump chop or mutton steak for 8d.? If the reader knows of any such place perhaps he will kindly communicate with the writer of this article; Mr. Sala, too, would doubtless like to hear from him.

And not only is meat dear while farmers are going bankrupt because of the low price of stock, but there is sometimes a suspicion of fraud. Mr. Sala merely mentions it, without committing himself in any way. It has been said that when frozen New Zealand mutton reaches this country it very frequently becomes prime English meat. Modestly labelled you can buy it for 4d. a pound; but when the label is fancy 7d. per pound is added to the price, a circumstance which leads one to the conclusion that there are others besides the Heathen Chinee noted for ways that are dark. On the whole, the conclusion is that civilisation gives us the whistle, but makes us pay exorbitantly for it. Coleridge was right in saying that machinery does not cheapen eatables. Man's maw is the costliest of all possessions.

The Emperor of China must be one of the most philosophic gentlemen of the age. For several months his country has been in the throes of a fearful war, yet, as my newspaper informs me, he is just beginning to take an interest in the struggle. After half the Chinese Army has been annihilated, and nearly the whole of the Chinese Fleet sunk, the Emperor condescends—from pure philosophic curiosity one presumes—to enquire how the fighting is going and what have been the results so far. The self-command is sublime, the apathy super or infra-human, according to your point of view. Has his Celestial Majesty never heard of the German Emperor? Probably not; and the ignorance will inevitably rouse the contempt—it may be, the ire—of the great William. But, then, the monarch of the Flowery Land may not have heard of Napoleon, or Cæsar, or Alexander, or Charlemagne—it is even possible he has never heard of the Flood. But he is mending. He has granted foreign ambassadors an audience and takes a “keen interest in the war.” How promising! When

the Japs are in Pekin he may dimly realise that he is not sole Potentate of the Earth, that naughty little nations dispute his sovereignty—nay, that they threaten his very existence. The manner in which he is evincing his interest in current events is, it must be said, rather ominous to his subjects. He has begun with wholesale decapitation as a means of stimulating the virtue of bravery. Everyone to his tastes; but, on the whole, I am glad I do not live under the beneficent rule of the Emperor of China.

One wonders what the grim humorist, who gave us “Sartor Resartus,” “Latter Day Pamphlets,” and “Shooting Niagara” would say to the gush that is now being poured out so copiously in his honour. As my readers are no doubt aware, a movement is on foot having for its object the purchase of Carlyle's old house at Chelsea. As an instance of hero-



worship the object is laudable, and it will be interesting to have a sort of Carlyle Museum. Moreover, the project, if carried to a successful issue, will rescue the temporary abode of a man of genius from the cats and dogs. According to recent reports the house in which some of Carlyle's greatest works were written, to which many of the most distinguished people of the century were proud to resort, was literally little better than a kennel; in point of filth, indeed, it was, if we are to believe current tales, worse than many kennels. That disgrace will be wiped out with the acquisition of the place. But how is it that we cannot erect a shrine without floods of the nauseating talk which was the pet abomination of Carlyle? Quite recently there was a meeting at the Mansion House, which must have been a spectacle to make the judicious reverencers of genius stare or shed tears.

The most interesting event in the book world during the last month has been the re-publication of Mr. Meredith's "lost stories" under the general title of "*The Tale of Chloe*" (Ward, Lock and Co.) These stories appeared many years ago in the pages of a now defunct review, and have not been republished until now. Meredithians who possessed copies of the review containing the tales were loud in praises of their merit, indeed, would have such as had never read them believe they were the perfect print of their author's genius. They are, indeed, remarkable pieces of fiction, as everything that comes from Mr. Meredith's pen is remarkable; but they do not add to nor alter his reputation. There is tragedy in them and there is comedy; there is brilliant writing in them also, sometimes it is too brilliant, and that over brilliancy is Mr. Meredith's defect. It is a defect that may almost be called a merit; but it has interfered and must continue to interfere with the general reader's pleasure in Mr. Meredith's work. Yet how stimulating parts of *Chloe* are! how far removed from the bathos of the merely popular novelist. Let all who value wit, imagination, character, and style procure the book and read it. Another book that may be commended without qualification is "*One of Life's Slaves*," by Jonas Lie, the Norwegian novelist (Hodder Brothers), which has been admirably translated by Miss (?) Jessie Muir. Jonas Lie is one of the strongest

of living Continental writers, and "*One of Life's Slaves*" contains some of his best work. It is sad, inexpressibly sad, but it is not maudlin. Old favourites are "*Castle Rackrent*" and "*Japhet in Search of a Father*" with which Messrs. Macmillan and Co. inaugurate their new series of standard novels. This is, at a popular price, probably the prettiest series that has ever been offered to a much catered for British public. Well printed, well bound, and attractively illustrated, the books ought to have a wide sale. Another book, another novel be it said, that deserves attention is "*John March Southerner*," by George W. Cable (Sampson Low and Co.). Mr. Cable, as I need scarcely remind my readers, is an American writer of great distinction. Full of poetry and romance, and possessing the faculty of invention, the rare gift of style and the most delicious humour, his stories are among the best that are anywhere produced to-day. If readers of *THE LUDGATE* should by chance care for poetry, let them get the "*Poetical Works of James Thomson*," recently issued by Messrs. Reeves and Turner. "*The City of Dreadful Night*" is one of the great poems of our time, and some of its author's other works are scarcely less powerful. Unhappily they are scarcely less gloomy: but gloom may be forgiven when the imagination is true and strong.

J. A. S.

❧ PUZZLEDOM ❧

190. Cryptogram.

The following forms a well known motto:—
Mys gal qd jqpymqse mywl mys dihet.

191. Riddle.

We travel much, yet prisoners are
And close confined to boot;
We with the swiftest horse keep pace
Yet always go on foot.

192. Word Square.

Strengthens, A ruler, Memorandum books, The
middle, To make dear, Adorned with stars.

CONUNDRUMS.

- 193. Why is a whisper like a forged bank-note?
- 194. What is that which is often found where it is not?
- 195. When do we first hear of paper currency?
- 196. Why is wit like a Chinese lady's foot?

Five Prizes of Three-Volume Novels, cloth bound, will be awarded to the First Five Competitors sending in correct, or most correct, answers by 20th April. Competitions should be addressed "April Puzzles," THE LUDGATE ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE, Temple House, Temple Avenue, London, E.C. Post cards only, please.

ANSWERS TO MARCH PUZZLES.

183. *Book-worm*

184. *Cheetah.*

185. *Load,
Ouse,
Asks,
Desk.*

186. *Because it is often tapped.*

187. *Because his is all net profit.*

188. *A good appetite.*

189. *Because they are both on the look out
for new stars.*

The following are the names and addresses of the five winners in Puzzledom in our February Number, to whom the Three-Volume Novels have been sent:—B. Browne, Clapham Common, West Side, London, S.W.; Miss Badham, 33, Balham Hill, S.W.; E. W. Gay, Avonleigh House, Allington Road, Southville, Bristol; Miss Newsam, 6, Oxford Road, Worthing; Miss E. Linzell, Portscatho, Cornwall.

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION.

A PRIZE of one guinea will be paid each month to the Competitor sending in the best and most artistic photograph. The Editor's decision on this point to be final.

Subjects may be selected from Landscapes, Seascapes, Studies from Life (people or animals), well-known Buildings, Ruins, &c. The larger the picture the better. But portraits will not be eligible.

All photos sent in must be mounted on card and named at the foot of print.

The Competitor's name and address must be written clearly on the back of each subject.

The Coupon, which will be found at the foot of the Contents page of this number of THE LUDGATE MAGAZINE, must be cut out and pasted on the back of any one photo sent in and be signed by the Competitor.

A Competitor may send in any number of photographs, provided they are sent in one parcel and accompanied by a Coupon. One Coupon will be sufficient for each parcel, whether it contains one or more photos, and should be addressed, "April Photos," THE LUDGATE ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE, Temple House, Temple Avenue, London, E.C.

No photographs will be returned under any circumstances, but will remain the property of the Editor.

The winning photo for the month, together with such other photos that the Editor may deem worthy, will be reproduced in THE LUDGATE, together with the winner's name and address.

The Competition for April will close on the 30th April and the winner will be announced in our June Number.

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